EXAMINING THE FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE FROM THE SITE SUPERVISOR

PERSPECTIVE: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY USING VYGOTSKY'S

ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT THEORY

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

BY

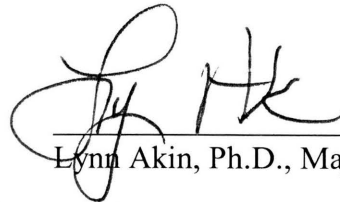SIAN BRANNON, B.A., M.S.

DENTON, TEXAS

MAY 2013

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
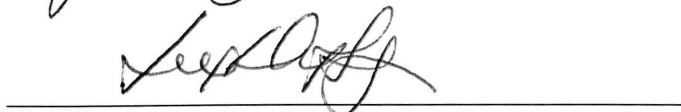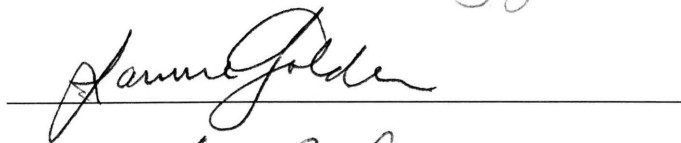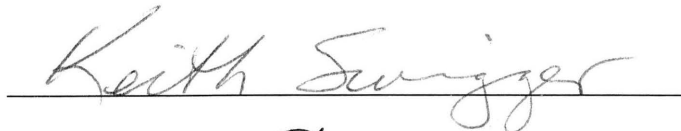DENTON, TEXAS

March 20, 2013

To the Dean of the Graduate School:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Sian Brannon entitled "Examining the Fieldwork Experience from the Site Supervisor Perspective: A Mixed-Methods Study Using Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory." I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Library Science.

_____
Lynn Akin, Ph.D., Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

_____

_____

_____
Director, School of Library and Information Studies

Accepted:

_____
Interim Dean of the Graduate School

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Lynn Akin – Patient, helpful, smart, and a wonderful mentor. Thank you.

Dr. Swigger & Dr. Golden – Without your input, review, and critique, I wouldn't have learned as much as I did. I appreciate it.

Cory – I think you wanted this more than I did. I love you.

My parents – Mom-thanks for being reassuring, calming, and encouraging. Dad-thanks for the persistent editing and support (now it's your turn).

Kristi – My tenacious study buddy. Probably wouldn't have finished without you.

Sarah and Gloria – My precious volunteers. I hope you learned something. I owe you big time.

ABSTRACT

SIAN BRANNON

EXAMINING THE FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE FROM THE SITE SUPERVISOR PERSPECTIVE: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY USING VYGOTSKY'S ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT THEORY

MAY 2013

The purpose of this study was to identify feelings and behaviors of fieldwork supervisors in public libraries using Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory as a background for design, analysis, and discussion of results. This research sought to find out how fieldwork supervisors perform initial assessments of their fieldwork students, what activities and assignments are conducted during the experience, how the supervisors assess the students, and how they feel about their role in the process. The study began with an online survey (77 respondents), continued with 25 interviews, and concluded with a content analysis of 47 evaluation forms provided by library and information science education programs. Results of the survey and interviews were compared to the evaluation forms and the American Library Association's Core Competences of Librarianship. Results give a better understanding of the thoughts and actions of fieldwork supervisors in public libraries, and a new fieldwork evaluation form is proposed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ix

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Fieldwork experiences in libraries have been a part of library education since its formal beginning in the 1800s. They exist as a pathway to employment via practical experience, and to initiate students into real workplaces, cutting down on the transition time students incur upon starting employment. Fieldwork experiences also serve as the real-world center for students to put into practice what they learned in their coursework assignments. The results of student participation in fieldwork include appreciation of library work in practice, acquisition of practical skills, and understanding of the principles and values of the profession.

Definitions

Fieldwork has many variations, definitions, and interchangeable terms associated with it. Library schools have different names for the experience, including practicum, field problems, internship in libraries, library practice work, professional field experience, and cooperative education (Futas 1994; Mediavilla 2006). According to the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE), fieldwork essentially entails learning in a professional work setting (1990). Formally, ALISE says it

is the "structured pre-professional work experience which takes place during graduate coursework or after coursework but preceding the degree" (Futas 1994, 146).

Residencies are distinguished from the fieldwork discussed in this dissertation, as a residency is generally considered a post-degree assignment (Futas 1994). Internships are viewed as an assignment that is usually for-pay, and involves complete transition from "theorization to application" (Hempstead 1971, 116). Work-study programs, or trainee programs, are normally open-ended, paid assignments serving the needs of a particular school or library, and are not tied to an academic year. These are not generally considered in library school fieldwork requirements (Monroe 1981). Practica are differentiated from internships as they are traditionally unpaid (Nakano and Morrison 1992; Ward 1973) and are typically focused on skill development. The American Library Association's (ALA) *Glossary of Library and Information Science* says a practicum is a "specified period of practice work in a library…with the purpose of relating the study of theory and work experience…usually being carried on simultaneously" (Young 1983, 174). This definition of practicum is the closest to the general definition of fieldwork considered at this time.

For the purposes of this dissertation, Coleman's definition of fieldwork (echoed by Nakano and Morrison 1992) as a "relatively short-term, professionally supervised work experience offered as part of the school's curriculum and taken during the academic sequence" (1989, 22) is restricted to unpaid experience, and enlarged to include the

practica and field experiences discussed literature describing fieldwork. It is generally

held that fieldwork of this nature is conducted pre-degree, but at the end of a degree

program (Monroe 1981; Palmer 1975). It is commonly administered by faculty or

designees within library schools. A host site is the location where the fieldwork occurs. A

fieldwork supervisor (FWS; FWSs) is the librarian at the host site who is responsible for

receiving, guiding, training, and assessing a student during the fieldwork experience.

Research Problem

The student earns the grade and the library school oversees administration of the

fieldwork, but it is the fieldwork supervisor who serves as the "more capable peer"

(MCP; MCPs) (Vygotsky 1978, 86; 1987) guiding the student through the experience.

Accordingly, the FWS first assesses the student's knowledge, then determines

responsibilities, orients the student to the new workplace, sets schedules, provides

guidance, and ultimately may participate in the assignment of a grade for the experience.

FWSs should be prepared to act as managers, mentors, advisors, and counselors (Brundin

1989; Nugent 1998). Mentoring has been categorized as encompassing these roles, as

Anderson and Shannon say it can be defined "as a nurturing process in which a more

skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors,

encourages, counsels, and befriends a less experienced person" (1988).

Fieldwork is beneficial to students, library schools, practitioners, and the

profession as a whole (Berry 2005; Claggett et al. 2002; Samek and Oberg 1999). FWSs

serve as a more knowledgeable person in the fieldwork relationship, and they guide the student towards being a competent practitioner, echoing Vygotsky's (1987) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development.

Theoretical Framework

In its simplest form, cognitive constructivism as a broad learning theory describes how a learner comes to know something, and says that the newly acquired knowledge is built on what the learner already knows. It encompasses learning experiences where emphasis is moved from the traditional teacher-student hierarchy to where the student becomes responsible for participating actively in his or her learning. Constructivism is a way for educators to understand what learners should know at certain ages, and for educators to understand that learners cannot simply accept and know new information, but rather learners must assimilate that new information with their own existing knowledge (Bransford, Brown, and Cooking 1999).

As a subset of constructivism, sociocultural theory explains how cognitive development is integrated into social interactions, organized activities, and culture (Tharp and Gallimore 1988). Vygotsky was a psychologist who is considered a pioneer in sociocultural theory (Daniels 2008). In contrast to other work that emphasized development before learning, Vygotsky's work integrated discovery, learning, and development simultaneously through social interaction. In the 1930s, Vygotsky developed the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory, which assimilates the

4

concepts of modeling and imitation, and integrates previously-learned behaviors with the guidance of an expert in order to extend what a student knows (Vygotsky, 2004). Essentially, there are problems that one can solve independently; however, with the partnership of another, more capable peer (MCP), the novice or apprentice can proceed to a higher level of intellectual development (Taylor and MacKenney 2008; Vygotsky 1987). According to Vygotsky, a "more capable peer" is one who takes on the role of knowledgeable collaborator in order to contribute to a learner's eventually solving problems on his or her own (1978; 1987). This can be a formal teacher, or someone other than a formal teacher, who assists, coaches, or guides a student. Vygotsky's definition of the ZPD is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with MCPs" (1978, 86; 1987).

In figure 1, the "Learner's understanding" area is a representation of what the learner currently knows. With guidance from an MCP, the learner progresses through the "Zone of Proximal Development" to obtain the "More capable peer's understanding." This movement can take place in steps, or scaffolds, or it can be in one swift movement, depending on the guidance of the MCP, "collaboration with others" (Vygotsky 1978, 85; 1987), and the assignments and tasks presented to the student. As the student completes tasks, the MCP considers the next step to take (Ash and Levitt 2003). It is thought that after the guidance period, the learner's knowledge base will expand to consist of what the

MCP knows about the particular concepts the student is studying, and allow that student to solve related problems (Vygotsky 1978).
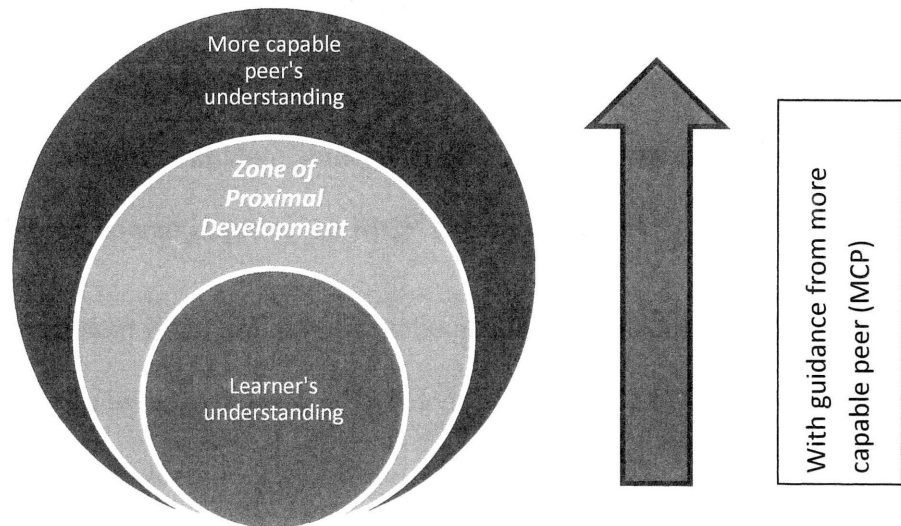
Figure 1. Visual representation of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory.

There are three things necessary for the ZPD approach to function: initial knowledge of what the learner can do, a method determined by the MCP to help the learner solve problems, and an idea of how progress will be gauged (Scott 2008). Once the fieldwork experience is complete, and in order to determine if the ZPD approach was successful, there is a need for assessment on the part of the FWS to determine whether the student has not only completed the progression agreed upon initially, but also to evaluate whether or not the student obtained any of the "more capable peer's" understanding.

Ash and Levitt (2003) describe the occurrences within the ZPD as a four step process that also benefits the MCP:

- MCP examines student's initial work on prescribed assignments
- MCP acknowledges gap between expectation and student performance
- MCP uses his or her own experience to adjust assignments and reevaluate goals
- MCP continues to assess student ability, but also gains information from the experience about how to improve the MCP's methods

In their scenario, the student is not the only one who gains more understanding. Although the student is gleaning knowledge through scaffolded projects, the MCP learns the value and viability of goals and projects.

It has been said that the "heuristic value of the (ZPD) has not been sufficiently exploited" (Ivic 2000, 482), and this research further examines the theory. The concepts of the ZPD can be reflected in the library science fieldwork experience. The student serves as the apprentice learner who has a knowledge base in the form of a framework of the field provided by a library and information science curriculum, and who is now dependent on the intervention of an MCP in the form of the FWS for guidance toward more practical knowledge concepts beyond the student's current reach. The capability of the FWS comes from experience on-the-job. The FWS must initially evaluate a fieldwork student, and then construct a bridge composed of assignments and teachable moments for the student so he or she can learn the practical knowledge expected of librarians. The

activities contained in the bridge can be negotiated with the student, directed by the library school faculty, dictated solely by the FWS, or coordinated in a hybrid arrangement using multiple sources.

FWSs of library science students intervene in students' intellectual development, advancing the students from the formal and theoretical knowledge of the anticipated graduate degree through a series of diminishingly structured approaches until the students can perform professional tasks unassisted. They aid the student in reconciling what is learned through a graduate degree program in concordance with real-world examples. Vygotsky did not prescribe in his writings what assistance the more knowledgeable person should provide a student beyond demonstration and putting forth questions to inspire thought (Daniels 2001). Not all library schools provide guidance on this aspect for FWSs, either. It is up to the FWS to determine how to move the student through the ZPD.

The ZPD has been used in dissertations related to library and information science concepts. Schock incorporated ZPD in an exploration of implementation of technology-based school library programs (2011). Kim studied information seeking behavior of English language learners, and used the ZPD to show that having more capable English speakers available instills confidence, which could affect the students' information behaviors (2010). Wyatt instilled ZPD as a guide for students collaborating in virtual learning environments (2010). Lastly, McKechnie applied the ZPD theory as a framework for how learning occurs in the usage of public libraries by children (1996).

This research used the ZPD theory as an underpinning for determining how fieldwork supervisors in public libraries initially assess a student, the activities they use to assist students through the zone, and how they evaluate students.

Research Questions

The researcher identified FWS' thoughts and behaviors in their fieldwork supervision experiences related to Vygotsky's ZPD theory. Specific questions included:

R1: To what extent does the FWS perform an initial assessment of the student?

R2: In what ways does the FWS move the student through the ZPD?

R3: How does the FWS assess the student's progression through the zone?

R4: How does the FWS feel about his or her role in the fieldwork experience?

These questions were posed in this order to reflect the ZPD. In the beginning of the experience, there is a need to determine a student's knowledge and set forth a course to bridge the zone. Activities are determined and conducted to aid in a student's progression, and these must also be evaluated. At the end of the experience, an assessment is needed to determine if the student has gained the knowledge of the MCP. Finally, it is also pertinent to determine the attitudes and feelings of the FWSs participating in fieldwork.

The method through which the researcher reconciled these questions was through an online survey partnered with interviews of public library fieldwork supervisors, and a content analysis of the evaluation forms used by library and information science schools in fieldwork courses. The results of the surveys and interviews were analyzed for frequency and themes, and compared to analyzed content from evaluation forms the library schools provide to FWSs.

Delimitations

This study was delimited in participation to librarians with ALA-accredited degrees who supervised at least one fieldwork student in a public library in the past five years. The delimitation of degree was due to the comparison of assessment practices to the ALA *Core Competences of Librarianship* (2009). The imposed time limit was designed to curtail the effects of memory on the part of the FWS, and to account for the potential changes in the curricula of library schools. Therefore, the results may not be generalizable to librarians outside of public libraries, or those who have not supervised a fieldwork student within the past five years.

Limitations

Methodological limitations of this study included a small sample size relative to the population, the reliability of self-reported data, and the lack of responses to certain survey questions. Based on the researcher's 2012 analysis of LIS school webpages, it was determined that one library school had no fieldwork course equivalent, thus resulting in a

lack of evaluation form. Also, two library school websites were not in English, and were therefore excluded from the content analysis of evaluation forms.

Summary

This chapter introduced the research issues, definitions, and significance of the study. The theoretical background related to the fieldwork experience was discussed. Also explained were the limitations and delimitations of the study. The researcher aims to describe FWS' interactions with students, identify activities performed, gather information about student assessment, and illuminate the FWS perspective on the fieldwork experience. The purpose of the study was to determine the current practices of public library FWSs related to Vygotsky's ZPD theory. In the next chapter, other research regarding the history of fieldwork in library schools, the benefits of fieldwork, and varying perspectives and attitudes regarding fieldwork are reviewed.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The object of this literature review is to present a brief historical summary of

fieldwork research, an arrangement of varying perspectives, and the trends and gaps in

the field. For this review, the researcher specifically focuses discussion on American

Library Association's (ALA) accredited master's level degree-granting schools, with

mention of the early pre-accredited library schools as well. Occasional references to

international studies are mentioned for examples and comparison.

History of Fieldwork in Library Schools

Research looking at fieldwork in library schools has generally been historical and

comparative, showing a progression in the regard for fieldwork in the curriculum. Since

the late 1800s, the idea of fieldwork has been discussed in library literature. Monroe

stated that its initial purpose was to mitigate a deficiency of textbooks and a lack of

established curriculum (1981).

Library school advocates in the late 1800s argued that trained professionals were

needed, but the suggested methods through which to train them were varied and

opposing. Melvil Dewey spoke of fieldwork as apprenticeships, and recommended

guided, supervised experience as a part of librarian education (1879; Metcalf et al. 1943).

In 1923 Williamson said, on the other hand, that students reading library literature in conjunction with faculty teaching would be training enough. The first president of ALA, Justin Winsor, advocated in 1891 that fieldwork is "the best preparation for librarianship" (White 1961, 76). Much debate ensued during this time as to which of three methods of training was the best: formal training in school, formal training in school coupled with fieldwork, or straight practical work in a library.

The number of library schools grew, and the differences between the training programs expanded. The contest between theory versus practice raged, and ALA committees conducted a number of studies to ascertain the extent of uniformity in schools and to make recommendations for changes. In 1905, the Committee on Library Training stated a requirement for at least one-sixth of a student's time to be spent in supervised practice work (Churchwell 1975). Library schools disagreed, although one library school, Antioch College in Ohio, did initiate a cooperative fieldwork type of education. Those students took turns filling practical positions in libraries in Ohio, then traded back to class work. Northwestern University and the University of Cincinnati also implemented similar plans during this time (St. John 1938).

Williamson's 1923 report showed that all schools of the day required some form of practice work, but regulations, time involved, and names varied. He commented that no school could rationalize decisions regarding fieldwork even though it appealed to the schools as part of the curriculum, and better administration of it was needed. Further,

13

schools could make no indications as to how sites were selected, and there was a lack of regard for student needs or wants.

ALA gave suggested curriculum requirements in 1926, including a minimum of 108 hours of fieldwork. In 1933, however, Reece denounced fieldwork and advocated a separation of it from the curriculum. St. John looked at the history, short as it was then, of fieldwork in library education and made the recommendation that an experimental program be established at libraries approved by the ALA Board of Education for Librarianship to train interns, and that perhaps this could occur at the expense of a philanthropic association. A trial program started in the Tennessee Valley Authority library system, but before it could conclude, the Second World War ended it (Palmer 1975; St. John 1938).

Debate and differentiation on the part of the library schools continued into the 1940s. At the 1948 Conference on Education for Librarianship, comparisons between the field and other professions made a strong case for including fieldwork in the curriculum. A paradigm shift from separating theory and practice to simultaneous occurrence seemed to transpire, and fieldwork gained more acceptance among library schools. Van Deusen noted the shift in his summary of library education at the time. He predicted that more attention would be paid to the students themselves, and a consideration of their lives before and after the library school program. This would entail a preparatory phase, in the form of fieldwork (1949).

One possible influence in this shift came in 1949 when the Medical Library Association created internship programs for medical librarian certification (Stallman 1954). In the 1950s, a realization came to library schools – they could rework their curricula from one-year to two-year programs, and then incorporate a balance of classwork and practice (Rothstein 1989).

The 1960s brought more research and suggestions from different angles, including medical librarianship interns, suggestions of favor for fieldwork from the student perspective, and the need for more comprehensive study (Ricker 2005; Rothstein 1989). *The Conant Report* in the 1970s recommended a "substantial" fieldwork experience, but noted that only some faculty supported this. It was during this time that a number of library school surveys ensued, where researchers either analyzed the stated offerings of the schools, or polled them on fieldwork requirements. The findings showed an upward trend in the percentage of schools offering fieldwork in their curricula (Futas 1994).

In the 1980s library schools promoted provision of fieldwork as a job-seeking tool (Samek and Oberg 1999). Berry recommended in 1998 that prospective students make note of the availability of fieldwork in the curriculum as a selection tool in choosing the right library school program. Case studies of well-performed fieldwork and models for future development of fieldwork appeared. Students began writing about their own

experiences, and these articles could be used as recruiting tools for libraries and library schools alike (Samek and Oberg 1999).

Library School Surveys

Over the past century there have been numerous surveys of accredited library schools about their curricula in general, and of fieldwork offerings specifically. These surveys provided a succinct portrait of the requirements and administration of fieldwork at different schools, and showed how the varying definitions of fieldwork affect the responses given. From year to year the amount of schools requiring or offering fieldwork changed, and not always in a predictable manner (see table 1).

Table 1. Major surveys of library schools including a fieldwork component

Study conductor (Date reported)	Date of study	Number of schools offering data	Number of schools that require fieldwork of all students	Number of library schools that offer fieldwork as option	Typical hours required of student
Report of Committee on Library Schools (Larned et al. 1896)	1896	4	4	…	…
Report of the Committee on Library Training (Plummer et al. 1903)	1903	9	9	…	…
Association of American Library Schools (Vann 1961)	1915	15	15	…	120-464
Williamson (1923)	1921	15	…	…	160-480

Table 1 (continued)

Association of American Library Schools (Donnelly 1925)	1925	14	14	…	…
Van Deusen (1946)	1944	32	28	…	…
Rothstein (1989, reprint from 1968)	1967	36	10	…	…
Grotzinger (1971)	1969	42	…	14	…
Grotzinger (1971, second survey)	1970	48	10	…	…
Witucke (1976)	1972	55	6	…	18-450
Palmer (1975)	1973	35	…	20	80-160
Tietjen (1977)	1975	62	4	40	30-400
Coburn (1980)	1980	55	…	50	80-180
Coleman (1989)	1987	59	6	49	84-225
Nakano & Morrison (1992)	1988	55	7	42	…
Howden (1992)	1989	51	8	38	…
Markey (2004)	2002	54	9	…	…

Many surveys occurred during the first few decades of formal library school instruction. After Van Deusen's survey of fieldwork in 1944, two more decades went by with no updates. However, from the 1960s through the 1980s, many research studies resulted in information about fieldwork. It's possible that this proliferation was a result of the growing number of library schools, and the interest in discovering more about the curriculum of each. The rest of this historical section talks about these surveys, involving more specifics as to grading information, required hours, and other details.

A primary exploration conducted by the ALA Committee on Library Training after its formation in 1903 discerned that library schools were experiencing a shift from

general apprenticeships to more theoretical curricula (Vann 1961). Two years later, only three of 11 schools met the recommended standard for practice work in library curriculum set forth in 1905 by a new Committee on Library Training, who advocated one-sixth of a library school student's time be spent in fieldwork. A 1915 survey by the Association of American Library Schools showed practice work varying between 120 to 464 hours in one year programs (Rothstein 1989).

Another survey regarding fieldwork requirements occurred through Williamson's visits to library schools in the early 1920s. All of the 15 schools he visited required practical library work. Even though it was required, the schools had different constraints and methods for administering the programs, and hours required ranged from 160 to 480 (1923). He summarized that fieldwork could show student skill, summarize classwork, help a student's career, and give respite to busy faculty (Rothstein 1989).

The American Association of Library Schools reported that all 14 library schools in 1925 required fieldwork, and the next year, the ALA Board of Education for Librarianship's "Minimum Standards for Graduate Library Schools" recommended that 108 hours of a library school student's time be spent in fieldwork (Katz et al. 1989). The next inquiry took place in 1944 when Van Deusen found four schools didn't offer fieldwork at all (1946).

In 1968, Rothstein published results from his examination of 36 library school catalogs. He reported that most of the schools requiring fieldwork might waive the

18

obligation for students with prior experience (Rothstein 1989). A few years later Grotzinger followed up Rothstein's study with a survey sent directly to the schools because she thought content-analysis of the catalogs to be insufficient and inaccurate. She contacted 45 programs, asking for their definition of fieldwork, rationale for inclusion of fieldwork in their curricula, how a fieldwork program was administered, and what expenses were related to the program. She found that some had specialized variations of field experience, including internships and special courses. After 14 months, Grotzinger issued another survey to the original respondents and newly-accredited schools with clarification of her questions (Grotzinger 1971).

In 1972, Witucke surveyed 55 library schools as part of her dissertation, and found that 33 of them offered some form of fieldwork experience. Eleven schools required it as part of the degree program. She discovered that eight schools offered no credit hours for field work experience, and that 25 offered between one and 18 hours of credit. Another finding was that the required amount of time spent doing fieldwork by students varied from just 18 to over 200 hours. Twenty-three programs issued a letter grade for the course, and nine listed a pass/fail grading system. Not much was required by any school for assessment, and few schools had communication between faculty and fieldwork supervising librarians (Witucke 1976).

Shortly thereafter, Palmer questioned 58 library schools in his 1973 survey covering different types of fieldwork. His results show that practica were the most

popular form of fieldwork experience offered by schools. His conclusion was that field experience was "about to enter its Renaissance" (Palmer 1975, 252). Tietjen queried 62 library schools at the request of the Council on Library Resources in 1975. She discovered that fieldwork policies still varied greatly. Four schools required fieldwork, ranging from 40 to 120 hours. She studied the responses geographically, indicating that the Southeast offered more fieldwork opportunities (1977).

In 1978, Coburn received responses from 55 library schools and found that 50 offered some form of fieldwork, and the range of necessary hours was between 80 and 180. Twenty-seven schools offered letter grades, and 18 used a pass/fail system. He asked in his questionnaire about payment to the student by the fieldwork site. Some schools have no problems with the practice, and one school even paid the fieldwork supervisors for each student they had doing fieldwork. Twenty-eight schools offered three credit hours for completion of a fieldwork assignment. Coburn also studied the similarities and differences among the components of the evaluation forms provided by the library schools (1980).

Almost ten years passed before the next examination of fieldwork requirements. Coleman distributed a survey to all ALA-accredited programs in 1987. At this time only four schools reported not providing fieldwork as part of their curricula, and only four schools reported that 100% of students took a fieldwork course. Half of the schools graded by issuing letter grades; the other half used a pass/fail system. Half of the schools

counted the course for three credit hours, with six schools not offering credit at all. The range of hours for fieldwork experience varied from 84 to over 200 hours (Coleman 1989). Though their research was not aimed specifically at fieldwork experiences but rather at reference coursework, a 1988 survey by Nakano and Morrison indicated that six schools did not offer any fieldwork course work.

The Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) decided to explore fieldwork requirements in library schools in 1989. Eighty-four percent offered course credit. ALISE did not inquire as to the length requirements for fieldwork courses, but did show that many schools had fieldwork prerequisites. The Association has continued asking these questions for the Curriculum section in annual statistical reports (Barron and Harris 2004). One result from this study is the acknowledgement of a need for standards across library schools for fieldwork (Howden 1992). During 2000 and 2002, Markey researched education trends in library and information science, comparing library school names, degree names, degree programs, and required coursework and found that 9 of 54 schools require fieldwork (Markey 2004).

Benefits of Fieldwork

Various benefits are attributed to fieldwork. Theory can be linked to practice; experience can be linked to coursework (Berry 2005; Claggett et al. 2002; Samek and Oberg 1999; Silver 2006; Stielow and Tibbo 1987). Relationships are forged, and much can be learned from observing seasoned librarians (Futas 1994). Students are exposed to

21

technologies that they only read about during coursework (Holland 2006), they develop their own thoughts towards the profession (Tilley 1997), and they can create a portfolio of work products to use in job interviews (Maurer and Wicks 2005). Another benefit is that a fieldwork experience may indicate to a student that the field is not the correct one for them (Lee 2003; Samek and Oberg 1999). If it is, though, then through fieldwork students can gain leadership skills (Mardis 2007), self-confidence, motivation, and responsibility (Brundin 1989; Coleman 1989; Gooden 2005).

Though her study was conducted in South Africa, Nassimbeni's case-study comparison (1990) resulted in a list of many benefits to students participating in fieldwork regardless of geographical location. Though they may not all occur in a single student's fieldwork experience, and they might not all be considered worthwhile by faculty or site supervisors, the benefits in table 2 are ways to evaluate a student's experience:

Table 2. Benefits of fieldwork experience for students

Benefit
identify basic skills
exemplify material taught in class
explain user needs
teach about library organization
encourage professional attitudes
test practical abilities
allow independent work
observe practicing librarians
provide the link between theory and practice
encourage practice in communication
offer a break from traditional coursework

Table 2 (continued)

check a student's potential for the profession
give students professional networking opportunities
expose students to different environments
familiarize students with library routines and tools

Hempstead adds to this list the benefits of correlating all parts of an educational program, practicing ethics, and creating innovations in the profession (1971).

A major benefit of fieldwork is the actual work experience gained that is appropriate for an entry-level resume (Ball 2008; Damasco and McGurr 2008; Oberg and Samek 1999). Forty-nine percent of recent graduates in Ricker's study indicated that fieldwork guided their career choice (2005). Students gain valuable professional contacts and develop a network of practitioners that can come in handy during a job search (Banks and Lents 1992; Becker 2000; Coleman 1989; Witucke 1976).Through the work products required of some fieldwork students, students develop organizational and critical thinking skills (Tilley 1997). Students also improve social and interactive skills in fieldwork experiences (Prytherch1982).

For library schools and faculty, there are benefits as well. Through fieldwork courses, they are offering practical experience to students, and providing host sites with assistants who have knowledge from recent coursework. Committing to a fieldwork program shows a dedication to a student's future (Oberg and Samek 1999), and in some schools, students are demanding more practical experience (Cherry et. al 2011). Schools

are essentially expanding teaching staff with site supervisors, and are forming professional relationships with them as well (Futas 1994). Fieldwork allows library schools the chance to assess their curricula against current practice in the field (Coleman 1989), and make a contribution to the profession (Conant 1980).

Working with students can be thought-provoking and rewarding. Fieldwork supervisors report that when hosting fieldwork students, they experience an improved awareness of theory (Banks and Lents 1992). The host site also benefits from the fresh outlooks of incoming students (Claggett et al. 2002; Ferrer-Vinent and Sobel 2011; Prytherch 1982), while library school faculty or designees expand the schools' reach into the practitioner realm. Supervisors may also feel that they are giving back to the profession, contributing to its vitality (Dougherty and Lougee 1983; Nutefall 2012; Tilley 1997) through training future practitioners and encouraging application of the ideals of the profession. In addition, by supervising students, they can help break students' bad habits (Hempstead 1971), and identify those who may be worth hiring (Hoy 2011; Maurer and Wicks 2005).

Negative Aspects of Fieldwork

There are various negative characteristics attributed to fieldwork experiences. There are complaints by students about the lack of feedback from site supervisors, and unconstructive experiences where site supervisors expect too much of students, or provide training that is too intense (Damasco and McGurr 2008; Malik and Ameen 2010;

Nakano and Morrison 1992). Other complaints of students are that they are bored (Malik and Ameen 2010), have difficulties dealing with patrons, are frustrated with their lack of practical knowledge, feel that too many hours were required for fieldwork, and think the structure of the program is nonprofessional or missing altogether (Leonard and Pontau 1991).

There are many difficulties in creating and administering a fieldwork program (Holland 2006; Nugent 1998; Rothstein 1989; Witucke 1976). Some faculties feel that site supervisors may not spend enough time with students, or may be "too busy or burnt-out to serve as good role models" (Nakano and Morrison 1992, 124). Others state that the lack of experience on the students' part would not be fair to various involved parties: the students, the site supervisors, or the users they would be serving. Faculty also indicate the length of degree programs is already short (Coleman 1989; Conant 1980) and crowded (Moynahan 1997), and it might be advisable not to dedicate a full semester's course to fieldwork (Conant 1980). Budgets are also considered a barrier (Coleman 1989; Monroe 1981).

Faculty may be inclined to think of fieldwork as negative because in some schools, they are not compensated for administering the programs (Coleman 1989). In some curricula, fieldwork may count as a course taught, but often there is no compensation for the work. Whether or not fieldwork is taken into account during faculty evaluations is another matter of variation. Because fieldwork could possibly entail

significant coordination, assigned time for site visits, and much interaction with a single student, it may not be considered worthwhile by some faculty (Monroe 1981). A pedagogical consideration is that a library school cannot guarantee the usefulness or value of the experience presented by the host library (Rothstein 1989), and that students may have "no one to supervise his work critically or from a theoretical point of view" (Metcalf et al. 1943, 50). Essentially, the fieldwork will only be as worthy as the host site makes it.

A negative view from site supervisors is that hosting a fieldwork student can be an interruption to normal routines (Banks and Lents 1992). Fieldwork supervisors may not interested in hosting fieldwork students because of the amount of time required (Conant 1980; Ferrer-Vinent and Sobel, 2011; Hacker 1986; McGurr and Damasco 2010; Starmer 2004); students require continuous training and oversight for a considerable period of time (Genovese 1991; Tilley 1997). Supervisors also complain about the students themselves, denouncing lack of preparation (Conant 1980; McGurr and Damasco 2010), maturity, and focus (Malik and Ameen 2010), and feel they are a risk to their libraries' standard level of service (Prytherch 1982).

There is a gap between what a site supervisor thinks of the fieldwork experience and the faculty's expectations. Some professors have not been 'active' in the practitioner world for some time, and may therefore be out of touch with current practice. Some supervisors believe there is poor communication between schools and host sites (Tilley

1997), that they get little coaching from faculty regarding fieldwork content or structure (Leonard and Pontau 1991), and some form of training would help connect the site supervisor and faculty (Ward 1973). Supervisors may not be trained in educational theory or development of curriculum (Williamson 1923; Witucke 1976; Wright 1949). The host library itself can inflict a negative aspect on fieldwork. If too small, the library cannot provide a varied experience to the student; if too big, it can't risk the long training periods for small return on investment of time and effort (Prytherch 1982).

Roles of Fieldwork Participants

Students

Students write about their fieldwork experience, detailing their thoughts and the specific projects they worked on, and the roles that they play (Elmborg et al. 2005; Sankey 2010). Students have reported a host of positive reactions to fieldwork experiences, expressing that they understand how the theory translates into practice (Holland 2006; Nakano and Morrison 1992). Others were surprised at their interactions with patrons, but were pleased to get to practice communication skills (Brundin 1989). Some are grateful to talk to practitioners and site supervisors (Damasco and McGurr 2008). Fieldwork students are often sought out for special projects because some practitioners feel that they will perform better than an employee because of the commitment the students have to the profession (Genovese 1991).

In the ALISE guidelines for fieldwork, responsibilities for the student are clear. Students should write their own learning objectives, seek out a faculty supervisor, locate a fieldwork site (Ward 1973), and contribute effort to the site and work products (ALISE 1990). This places a large amount of responsibility on the student, but at a graduate level this is not outside of expectations (Starmer 2004).

Faculty and Library Schools

If providing fieldwork opportunities, the faculty and library schools must commit to preparing, implementing, and evaluating a fieldwork program. Faculty can tie fieldwork experiences into their own research agendas, but the experiences must relate to the student's needs as well (Hempstead 1971), and faculty must dedicate time to guiding students through the process (Williamson 1923).

The ALISE recommendations for faculty are to approve the student's intended plan, meet with the student on a regular basis, and evaluate the student along with the site supervisor (1990). Faculty should be solely responsible for communicating to the site supervisors what is expected, scheduling the student's time, and offering a background of the student, in order to fashion an appropriate experience (Brundin 1989).

There are mentions of associations between the library school and site supervisors (Damasco and McGurr 2008; Smith 2007). Success of fieldwork relates to a close relationship between the two (Nakano and Morrison 1992). Library schools are happy that student-scheduling is handled by site supervisors. Supervisors indicate discord

28

between themselves and faculty regarding a paucity of site visits and assessment issues (Lyders and Wilson 2010).

Site Supervisors

Site supervisors should be prepared to act as supervisor, mentor (Nugent 1998), advisor, and counselor (Brundin 1989). They can also be recruiters (Claggett et al. 2002). To attract good students, a supervisor should make themself known to library schools, and talk with faculty about potential assignments. An important thing ALISE mentions that is not found elsewhere in the literature is that the site supervisor has the authority to select the student (1990). They are not required to accept all fieldwork applications, and they do not have to keep non-performing workers.

The site supervisor must be knowledgeable of current events and trends in the profession. They must have teaching ability (Williamson 1923; Wright 1949). They should be able to direct students to professional development opportunities, such as training courses, organization involvement, and appropriate print and online resources. To perform consistently, it might be helpful for them to reuse training materials and methods for each student (Maurer and Wicks 2005). Also, keeping a list of projects prepared in advance will help stave off lulls in the student's experience, and help in the selection of future fieldwork students.

Supervisors are sometimes portrayed negatively in research regarding fieldwork. Students can learn bad habits and biases (Berry 2005). There can be disagreements

29

between faculty and site supervisors regarding time lengths for assignments (Brundin 1989). Students report discontent with communication with site supervisors (Elmborg et al. 2001). At times supervisors are seen as not understanding the purpose of fieldwork, or as lacking teaching ability (Hacker 1986). They would therefore be seen as not adequately being able to answer student questions or make appropriate assignments. On the other hand, supervisors are occasionally represented as a boon to the process (Botello 2006), seen as serving as mentors, and noted as giving back to the profession (Claggett et al. 2002). The fieldwork experience requires commitment on the part of the supervisor to the student, and cannot be properly evaluated or successful without this commitment (Banks and Lents 1992; Damasco and McGurr 2008).

Assessment

As Wright said, if "practice work is to be truly educational, it must be as carefully thought out and planned as any classroom course" (1949, 40). Learning objectives are necessary, and the principles of education must be communicated to all involved parties. Fieldwork should demonstrate a close relationship with true classroom coursework, and should be married with learning objectives (Ball 2008; Ward 1973). Steps should be taken to ensure a student is not seen as free labor only (Berry 2005; Claggett et al. 2002; Hacker 1986; Williamson 1923), although this could be seen as a potential benefit to site supervisors (Futas 1994; Ottolenghi 2012).

ALISE urges developing an organized agreement before beginning fieldwork, incorporating learning objectives, work responsibilities, and methods of monitoring and assessing the student (1990). In an agreement with the host site, there are several things to be considered: compensation information, credit, length of experience, expected work products, responsibilities of all parties, and determination of who evaluates whom, how, and when (McGurr and Damasco 2010). Students and faculty should initially meet to determine a schedule, and what the fieldwork experience should cover (Banks and Lents 1992). Faculty could provide site supervisors with student resumes and transcripts so that appropriate projects can be determined, related to the students' experiences (Samek and Oberg 1998).

The objectives agreed upon by those involved can be tied to Prytherch's goals for fieldwork. These are represented in table 3.

Table 3. Prytherch's goals for fieldwork (1982)

Goal
to tie theory to practice, especially in management and communication
to spread a student's experience beyond a familiar type of library, extending career options
to develop students' own feelings for the profession
to make contact with members of the profession
to permit school involvement in examining student attitude and motivation
to augment the school's influence on the profession
to promote the concept of 'learning through doing' (Monroe 1981)

In doing an overall assessment of a fieldwork program, one should look at not just the students, but the faculty and host sites as well. Students are to be judged on initial personality type and professional attitude, and then on the work products produced and satisfaction levels with the fieldwork. Host sites should be considered for their attitudes towards students, corporate personality, work relationships with schools, and the type of work normally offered. Faculty need to demonstrate commitment to fieldwork and the student (Prytherch 1982).

ALISE suggests a multitude of methods to assess fieldwork performance. When students, faculty, and site supervisors create a work agreement before the fieldwork assignment starts, they can agree upon learning objectives, and which work outputs and methods for evaluation to use. The student could create a journal, paper, or portfolio. The faculty can do a site visit. The supervisor can provide an evaluation. Students may give oral reports, sometimes based on reading lists.

Coburn provides a rudimentary evaluation form that could be adapted for different fieldwork situations (1980). He based this form on an analysis of entry-level librarian position descriptions, during which he identified skills and characteristics required of those job candidates. One section of this form covers personal attributes, such as integrity, personal appearance, and work habits. The second section covers professional competencies, like general knowledge, research skills, and communication effectiveness. He conducted another analysis of library school evaluation forms from

which he gleaned suggested rating scales, and characteristics to be reviewed. Coburn also admits incorporating his own "experience and judgment" (1980).

Ongoing communication between all involved is necessary so there are no surprises in assessment (Claggett et al. 2002). Instantaneous feedback on any misinterpretations or errors is often necessary (Genovese 1991). The student is not only gaining real world experience about library basics, but is also participating in an introduction to peer review, evaluation, and human resources issues. One school reports that its evaluation form serves as a mechanism through which students can get "more formalized feedback on their progress as measured against professional criteria" (Botello 2006, 15), although the exact criteria are not specified.

A weakness noted in the early practice of fieldwork was the lack of reporting from students (Williamson 1923). Components to include in a student reflection work product regarding fieldwork are the "high points" and "low points," with a description of which parts seemed worthwhile and which did not (Brundin 1989). Students should discuss how prepared they felt before the fieldwork, and give a general assessment overall.

Assessment as a problem regularly occurs in library literature, as it is difficult to assess what is not always seen (Brundin 1989; Damasco and McGurr 2008; Nakano and Morrison 1992; Ricker 2005). It is hard to create a fair evaluation of competence and skill based on infrequent observation. Faculties are noted as indicating the need for better

33

methods to assess student performance, and how to assess their own support of the students (Nakano and Morrison 1992). A lack of correspondence between faculty and site supervisors is an issue, and there is a lack of group effort in establishing the objectives before field experience begins (Coburn 1980; McGurr and Damasco 2010). No consensus exists as to whether faculty should ultimately be responsible for assigning grades or credit for fieldwork, or the site supervisor, or some combination of both parties.

Gaps in Research

Library school programs rely on adjuncts for certain courses (Maurer and Wicks 2005). If there are faculty complaints regarding the training of adjuncts and instruction abilities, then certainly there is a need to consider this in site supervisors also. Gathering this information would provide quality feedback for library schools in administration of fieldwork experiences, and possibly help tailor their curricula as well.

The large body of literature regarding fieldwork is lacking in research concerning site supervisors, their contributions to students' careers, the guidance they offer, and their assessment of their own performance as site supervisors (Samek and Oberg 1999). Aside from a few librarians reporting in case studies how they recommend use of students doing fieldwork (Banks and Lents 1992; Genovese 2005; Moynahan 1997), and other articles offering tips to supervisors (Gooden 2005; McGurr and Damasco 2010), there are no empirical studies done from a supervisor's perspective. It remains to be seen how supervisors feel they are prepared for being a substitute teacher, how they devise

34

assignment for students, the manner in which they approach assessment, and their general attitudes towards fieldwork participants.

Conclusion

The aim of this review is to show the breadth of studies dedicated to fieldwork in library science and to indicate that the perspectives of these studies generally neglect the study of fieldwork assessment and the perspective of the site supervisor. Research is needed to define the practices of fieldwork supervisors, and to determine the extent of assessments undertaken. This research will use interviews in combination with a basic survey as methods through which to explore the experiences of site supervisors regarding fieldwork. Topics covered will be the supervisor's initial evaluation of students, typical interactions and assignments, and evaluation method and frequency. This information will be compared to the evaluation expectations of library schools through a content analysis of evaluation forms provided by library schools. Methods will be covered in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

To explore practices and roles of the fieldwork supervisor (FWS) in fieldwork

experiences, triangulation of quantitative data and qualitative content was undertaken

through a three-part research design: a web-based online survey, telephone and email

interview completion, and content analysis of evaluation forms used by library and

information science schools. In part one, a survey was offered to public librarians who

have served as fieldwork supervisors. In the second part, librarians were given the option

to self-select to participate in a follow-up interview of open-ended questions related to

their supervision of fieldwork experiences. Lastly, the researcher solicited the site

supervisor field experience evaluation forms from English-speaking American Library

Association (ALA)-accredited library schools in North America that offer a fieldwork

course to analyze for themes related to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and

for topics covered in the field experience.

Ethical Implications

As this research was concerned with individuals' thoughts and actions, it

behooved the researcher to consider ethical implications, make every effort possible to

guarantee the privacy and rights of the participants, and to avoid physical or emotional

harm. The research proposal was presented to the researcher's Institutional Review Board (IRB), approved therein on April 16, 2012, and is included in Appendix A. Informed consent procedures, data collection methods, and confidentiality concerns were included in the proposal. The researcher made no attempts to coerce or manipulate any participant into disclosing information, and did adhere to confidentiality and anonymity practices.

Another ethical responsibility for researchers is the effort to make sure that discussion of findings of the research, and any related publications or presentations, are as accurate as possible (Gravetter and Forzano 2009). The researcher adhered to the IRB-approved research proposal, and did not manipulate data, create results, or plagiarize in this study.

Part One – Online Survey

The research design for the initial part of the study was a web-based survey, administered through Qualtrics software. In the survey, quantitative data gave a basis for comparison among frequencies of areas of interest. Descriptive parameters and Likert scales provided quantitative data for some replies, with open-ended text boxes providing more qualitative responses. Skip-logic was employed to funnel participants to relevant questions based on previous answers. The survey was administered online from a host website, and it collected information about activities related to guiding fieldwork students through the fieldwork experiences, assessments of the students, and feelings regarding the FWS's role in fieldwork.

Qualtrics is a "web platform for the creation and distribution of online surveys" (2012) that also stores survey data for analysis. The company informs researchers that the researcher 'owns' the data collected, although the company serves as the storehouse for the data on its servers, accessible through the Internet. In a white paper about security dated October 8, 2012, the company provides information about privacy policies, applicable security certifications and standards, and information about company employee quality and security. Data in Qualtrics are secured through access control, intrusion detection, anti-malware techniques, and penetration testing; access is restricted to the appropriate researcher and engineering or support staff at Qualtrics. Data are backed up daily and stored in a locked server room. Primary data storage is retained until the researcher requests deletion, and backups are retained for one year. Based on the information provided by Qualtrics, the researcher determined that the platform was secure and provided adequate protection for survey respondents.

Pre-testing of the survey transpired by offering it to librarians of the Denton Public Library in Denton, Texas, via email, and to Texas Woman's University doctoral students through a Blackboard discussion list in the Spring of 2012. A total of 16 respondents elected to test the survey voluntarily, with 11 completing it. The results of the pre-test highlighted semantic problems in the survey instrument, and also noted the need to improve question format on questions utilizing ranking. Suggested changes were incorporated and official data collection began on May 10, 2012.

Survey Instrument

The survey consisted of 34 questions with an additional space at the end that allowed participants to provide contact information if they were willing to participate in a follow-up interview. Fourteen of the questions were closed-ended, six were open-ended, and 14 questions were closed-ended but had an additional space marked "other" where participants could provide their own responses. These questions were collated in five sections. A complete rendition of the survey is presented in Appendix B.

The first section was titled "Let's Begin" and started with a brief restatement of the informed consent notice. It also reminded the participant that the survey was intended to be taken by those that have supervised an unpaid student participating in a short-term fieldwork course as part of his or her Master's Degree. The five questions in this section were intended to gather background information about the supervisors, including what degree they hold, when they received it, how many fieldwork students they have supervised in the past five years, their current position, and their familiarity with competency statements of professional organizations.

The seven questions in the second section, titled "Initial Assessment", were concerned with the beginning of the fieldwork experience, and inquired about the desirable qualities of a fieldwork student, activities generally performed on the first day, and fieldwork goal-setting. The next section of the survey, called "Student Progress," contained five questions about interactions with the fieldwork student, designing

39

assignments, the 2009 *Core Competences of Librarianship* from the American Library Association (ALA), which are included in Appendix C, and an inquiry as to the perceived success of assignments.

The "Student Assessment" section was fourth, and contained nine questions centered on evaluation. Frequency, method, and student involvement were the foci of these questions, and the section ended with a query about the supervisor's perceived success in evaluating the fieldwork student.

The final section of the survey, titled "Final Thoughts," had eight questions and a final space where a respondent could provide contact information for potential participation in the follow-up interview. These closing questions centered on the supervisors' own experiences as fieldwork students, the supervisors' opinions about supervision in fieldwork experiences, and an area for providing any relevant overarching thoughts that weren't covered in the survey questions.

A web-based survey was used because of its efficiency and speed of data collection, capability of reaching large samples, ability to include many variables, and low cost. In addition, it is thought that, while an online survey indicates implied consent, web-based research can provide "a greater sense of security and anonymity" for research subjects (Berg 2009, 85). It is acknowledged that surveys can be general and inflexible, and risk low response rates and nonresponse bias (Gravetter & Forzano 2009).

Validity in a survey instrument is the "degree to which [it] measures the variable it claims to measure" (Gravetter and Forzano 2009, 76). The survey instrument used in this research had sufficient face validity, but concurrent validity cannot be determined as the researcher could not find a similar, previously conducted survey instrument through which to compare results. Perhaps during future replication of this research, or as others embark on similar research, concurrent validity can be determined.

Population and Sampling

According to the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) Public Libraries Survey of Fiscal Year 2009, there were a total of 32,977.3 librarians with "ALA-MLS" working in public libraries. They define "ALA-MLS" as a Master's degree from a graduate library education program accredited by the ALA (Miller et al. 2011).

Participants for the survey were primarily recruited utilizing convenience and snowball nonprobability techniques involving the use of electronic outlets and discussion lists used by public librarians. A copy of the email solicitation is included in Appendix D. Nonprobability sampling was used because it was not possible for the researcher to determine the entire population of potential participants (how many of the overall population of "ALA-MLS" librarians have supervised at least one fieldwork student in a public library within the past five years) and ensure that everyone in the population had an equal chance of being included.

The participants in this research were limited by the following inclusion criteria:

- They must have earned a Master's degree from an ALA-accredited library school or its equivalent.

- They must have supervised at least one fieldwork student in a public library within the past five years.

A time limit was selected to curtail the effects of memory on the part of the FWS, and to account for the potential changes in the curricula of library schools.

The solicitation email was distributed through various outlets, represented in table 4, such as the Public Library Association blog, the PUBLIB listserv, and various library associations' email distribution lists. Calls for participation were posted once a month in May, June, July, September, and October of 2012, for a total of five months of data collection. Suggestions from survey participants of other relevant outlets were added to each of the next months' calls for participation.

Table 4. Calls for participation

When	Calls for Participation
May 2012	American Library Association (ALA) Membership Discussion Forum
	COLLDV-LIB listserv
	Heads of Central Libraries Discussion Group
	LIBREF listserv
	LLAMA Middle Managers Discussion listserv
	LLAMA Library Administration Discussion listserv
	NEWLIB-LIB listserv
	Public Library Association (PLA) Blog
	PLA on ALA Connect
	PUBLIB listserv

Table 4 (continued)

	PUBYAC listserv
	Reference and User Services Association listserv
June 2012	Same as May 2012
July 2012	All of above, plus:
	ALA Committee Interns listserv
	Public Libraries Technical Services Interest Group listserv
	Texas Library Association (TLA) Public Libraries Division listserv
	MyTLA Acquisitions and Collection Development Round Table
	MyTLA Cataloging and Metadata Round Table
	MyTLA Children's Round Table
	MyTLA District 7
	MyTLA Programming for Adults Interest Group
	MyTLA Reference Round Table
	MyTLA Small Community Libraries Round Table
	MyTLA Young Adult Round Table
September 2012	All of above, plus:
	ALA Committee Interns listserv
	ALCTS Leaders listserv
	Association for Library Service to Children listserv
	GLBT Round Table listserv
	Interests in library services for middle school aged youth listserv
	LLAMA on ALA Connect
	NEXTGENLIB Google Group
	PLA Member Leaders listserv
	UNT SLIS practica supervisors
	YALSA Serving Older Teens and Young Adults listserv
	YALSA Young Adult Advisory Council
October 2012	All of the above

The researcher also attended professional workshops, conferences, and meetings throughout the five months of data collection, and provided information about the research project to potential participants through distribution of invitational business cards containing the website of the survey (figure 2). Participants who self-elected to take

part were directed to a website that explained the purpose of the research, provided informed consent notices, and linked to the survey.

Figure 2. Recruitment business card

Sian Brannon
sbrannon@twu.edu

TWU Doctoral Student

Public Library
Fieldwork Supervisors
Dissertation Research

http://bit.ly/fieldworkLIS

Data collection ended on November 16, 2012. A total of 155 respondents opened the survey. List-wise deletion, which is exclusion of an entire response due to incomplete data, was used to extract incomplete responses based on a variety of reasons. Forty one responses were removed through list-wise deletion for not answering any question at all, leaving 114 respondents who answered at least one question. Two responses were cut list-wise for not answering a question about the number of fieldwork students they have supervised. Thirty three responses were removed list-wise for not answering a single question beyond the demographics questions. While the remaining 77 respondents may not have answered every single question in the remaining three sections, their responses were used in data analysis. A breakdown is represented in table 5.

Table 5. Summary of survey participation

Summary	Total
Clicked "Start survey" link	155
Did not answer a single question	41
Extracted for not meeting participation criteria	4
Removed for not answering questions beyond demographics	33
Responses used in data analysis	77

Assistance with determining the best procedures for determining sample size and extraction of respondents resulted from a November 7, 2012, interview with a research consultant at the University of North Texas' Information Research and Analysis Lab. As for the small sample, a consideration was the length of the survey, and also one problematic ranking question that appeared early in the order of questions that could have caused confusion for respondents.

Data Analysis

A complete set of survey data was downloaded into a spreadsheet and sorted according to qualifications listed above. Quantitative analysis of survey responses included frequencies, or counts of responses, and measures of central tendencies, such as median and mode. Qualitative responses were analyzed for themes and also utilized as whole parts to demonstrate findings presented in the next chapter.

Part Two – Interviews

The data gathered by interviews as an extension of the survey offered more qualitative content and allowed for deeper understanding of perspectives, assessment, and work assignments. This provided a mechanism "to elicit the subjects' thoughts, opinions, and attitudes about study-related issues" (Berg 2009, 105). The interview was expected to take up to thirty minutes to complete, and could have taken place on the telephone or through email according to the preference of the participants.

Interview Instrument

The questions for the interview were designed to be simple, affective, and short. The instrument included five main questions. Two of these questions had follow-up questions to elicit further response. The first question asked about the perceived role of the supervisor. The follow-up for this question offered a few suggestions regarding roles. The second question inquired as to the supervisor's knowledge of his or her fieldwork student's capabilities. The next question solicited information about how the supervisor guided students, and included a follow-up question to obtain more specific examples of activities. The fourth question addressed assessment and evaluation methods done by the supervisor, and the final question asked about the feelings and beliefs of the supervisor about the success and value of the fieldwork experience. The complete interview is in Appendix E.

An interview conducted through email encourages candid answers, eliminates variation in the question process, and allows the respondents to provide answers at their leisure. However, as opposed to a face-to-face interview, it also makes it more difficult to qualify indefinite answers. Also, it is thought that those who have strong opinions about the subject of the interview will be more likely to want to complete it, therefore resulting in a potentially biased sample (Powell 1997).

Population and Sampling

Survey respondents had the choice of providing contact information at the end of the survey through which the researcher could communicate with them for completion of the interview. A total of 37 survey respondents included contact information as implied consent for participation. The researcher contacted each by the email addresses provided to ask again if they would like to participate in a follow-up interview. If the respondent consented, they were asked his or her preference of participation method - by email or by phone. Thirty confirmed their willingness to participate – 28 by email and two by phone.

For those that responded and agreed to participate by email, the researcher sent interview questions via electronic questionnaire with a request that they be returned by the end of November 2012. A total of 23 electronic questionnaires were returned. For those that agreed to participate by phone, the researcher arranged for a time convenient to the respondent. Two phone sessions were conducted. A total of 25 interview responses were analyzed for this research.

The interview was conducted in a semi-standardized structured format, although questions were presented in the same order and in the same wording. The participants were permitted to ask questions of the researcher and the researcher could respond with clarifications. By completing the interview in the forms of phone and email, the researcher generated both active and passive responses (Holstein and Gubrium 2002). The lack of face-to-face interaction did limit the ability of the researcher to gauge the respondent's level of comfort or other nonverbal cues generally associated with face-to-face interaction (Berg 2009). In order to reduce bias during the phone sessions, the researcher practiced reading the questions beforehand in a consistent and calm tone, and did not interrupt respondents during their answers. The researcher also attempted not to provide any verbal signs of attitude towards any response (Gravetter and Forzano 2009).

Checklist Matrices and Summary Comparison

In order to extract useful findings from the interview data, the researcher employed qualitative text analysis techniques to study coded interview responses for prescribed thematic language reflecting the tenets of the ZPD, and for groupings of topics related to fieldwork assignments. The first step in this process was for the researcher to undertake a summative approach to content analysis by pinpointing fieldwork concepts, assessment themes, and tenets of the ZPD (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). The researcher did this by creating a checklist and matrix (Schutt 2006) in order for volunteer coders to identify specific relationships between the ZPD themes, fieldwork concepts, and

responses. The coding checklist and matrix, located in Appendix F, included the definition of the ZPD, a list of concepts related to each question, and a list of the research questions.

Two volunteer coders were chosen from the Texas Woman's University Cassandra listserv after a solicitation call on July 29, 2012, which is included in Appendix G. No remuneration was offered or provided to the volunteers. The two volunteers convened once with the researcher and were provided ten interview responses, the checklist matrix, and instructions. The volunteers coded independently and returned these ten coded matrices, which were then compared by the researcher through an intercoder check. The check consisted of visually comparing each matrix to the other coder's matrix and calculating a percent agreement using the researcher's coded matrix as a source document. This formula was utilized:

$$PA_o = \frac{A}{n}$$

In this equation, A is the number of agreements between the coders, n is the number of items coded by each (agreements plus disagreements), and PA_o is the percentage of agreement (Neuendorf 2002).

After calculation and determining the returned matrices for the first ten interviews had 86.6% agreement, the entire corpus of 25 interviews was provided to each volunteer coder and the researcher contacted each to discuss discrepancies. This level of agreement

satisfies various prescribed reliability values, as Krippendorf and others suggests 80% as a minimum for acceptance (2013; Riffe et al. 1998).

The volunteers returned the coded matrices as they completed them, and the researcher continued to verify consistency in agreement against each other, and against the coder's previous entries, hence maintaining *inter-coder* and *intra-coder* reliability. Finally, the researcher used the completed matrices to develop a summary comparison of the matrix concepts for analysis and discussion.

Part Three – Library School Evaluation Forms

Content analysis of fieldwork supervisor evaluation forms allowed for a cross-referencing of content and comparison to the actual practices of the FWSs, corroboration of similar information covered in the surveys and interviews, and alignment with the American Library Association's *Core Competences of Librarianship*. The researcher obtained copies of the assessment tools that English-speaking, ALA-accredited Library and Information Science schools offer to the site supervisors of fieldwork students at public libraries. The list of schools was generated by viewing the 2011 *Directory of ALA-Accredited Master's Programs in Library and Information Science* document found on the ALA website.

Form collection was done through purposive, or relevance, sampling by locating such forms on each school's website, or, if not available online, contacting the schools directly and requesting copies of the forms. All forms were collected between April and

June of 2012. No geographic restrictions were in place for form collection, but forms were only obtained from those schools whose websites were written in English. This eliminated two schools, one whose website was in French, and another whose website was in Spanish. One school does not offer an unpaid fieldwork course, and therefore has no evaluation form. Eight schools that do not use a formalized written or online form were also excluded from this analysis. Therefore, out of 58 ALA-accredited library schools, a total of 47 forms were collected and analyzed.

Form Coding

Inductive content analysis was selected as a research method in order to "make replicable and valid inferences" in textual content that emerged "in the process of a researcher analyzing a text" (Krippendorf 2013, 24). The methodology is reliable as its findings should be replicable if described well, and has validity as the contents are extracted directly from the forms themselves.

The use of content analysis allowed the researcher "to distill words into fewer content-related categories" (Elo and Kyngas 2008, 108). There are different types of units used in content analysis as explained by Krippendorf (2013). Sampling units are distinct sections of text distinguishable from one another, which are chosen to be included or exclude from analysis. In this study, each school's evaluation form comprised one sampling unit; therefore, there were 47 sampling units. These sampling units were easily distinguishable from one another, and made up the corpus for the content analysis.

Recording, or coding, units are the individual units of description that provide the basis for the statistical count (Krippendorf 2013). In this study, the words and phrases used specifically for evaluation that were contained in the evaluation forms served as the coding units. The coding units were the assessment characteristics, represented by words or phrases, on the forms. The researcher examined each form, copied each evaluation quality into a spreadsheet, and tallied instances of words and phrases.

According to Ryan and Bernard, identifying themes in content analysis occurs "before, during, and after data collection" (2000, 780). These classifications can be suggested by other research, found in literature reviews, and derived from the coding units themselves. For this research, those assessment characteristics aligned with each of the eight ALA *Core Competences of Librarianship* (2009) were identified, extracted, and grouped first. Then, the researcher used Coburn's 1980 analysis of library school forms as a thematic guide, clustered the remaining words and phrases into categories, and then frequencies within these categories were counted to ascertain how often distinct assessment characteristics appeared in the evaluation forms.

Conclusion

The methodologies chosen for this study were threefold – survey, interview, and content analysis of forms. Data for all three sections were collected over a total period of six months, then coded and analyzed. The survey was designed to provide data for analysis of all original research questions:

R1: To what extent does the FWS perform an initial assessment of the student?

R2: In what ways does the FWS move the student through the ZPD?

R3: How does the FWS assess the student's progression through the zone?

R4: How does the FWS feel about his or her role in the fieldwork experience?

The second part of the study involved follow-up interviews with survey respondents and was intended to help clarify responses in the online survey. Although it provided additional information about R1, R2, and R3, the interview specifically provided insight into R4 regarding how FWSs feels about their role in the fieldwork experience. The third section of the study, about evaluation forms provided by library and information science schools, was used as a comparison tool to see if there were differences in R3. In the next chapter, the researcher will discuss the findings of the survey, interview, and form analysis.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The research questions for this study inquired as to the experiences and behaviors
of fieldwork supervisors in regards to assessment and activities conducted therein. The
methodologies included a survey (part one), follow-up interviews (part two), and content
analysis (part three) of the evaluation forms used by Library and Information Science
schools. The discussion of findings is presented in those ordered sections.

Quantitative data analyses included frequencies, which are counts of occurrences,
and methods of central tendencies, including means and modes. These are displayed in
tables. Qualitative data gathered through open-ended text boxes, the follow-up interview,
and the evaluation forms provided to fieldwork supervisors by library schools were
analyzed through use of sample comments, coding for themes using volunteer coders, and
content analysis of textual forms.

Part One – Online Survey

The online survey was open for responses for a total of five months, resulting in
155 persons linking into the survey. Of these, 114 (73.5%) answered at least one
question. However, not all met the participation criteria of having a Master's degree from
an ALA-accredited library school or its equivalent, and having supervised at least one

fieldwork student in a public library within the last five years. Therefore, seventy eight (50.97%) responses were removed by list-wise deletion, which is completely removing the entire response set by those particular respondents, from the original 155 persons linking into the survey. A total of seventy seven (40.93%) of the original 155 were used in data analysis. Where any of these seventy seven respondents did not respond to a particular question, pair-wise deletion excluded them from data analysis. Use of pair-wise deletion, or exclusion of that respondent from any question analysis for which they did not provide a response, allows for matched correlational analysis. Results of the online survey are structured in the order of the survey questions, separated into five sections.

Survey Section 1 – Let's Begin

The first section was titled "Let's Begin" and started with a brief restatement of the informed consent notice. The five questions in this section gathered brief demographic information, and used radio buttons and check boxes for response gathering, with three questions having a text box for further clarification.

Q1: Which library-related degree do you have?

In the first question of the survey, the respondents were given options of various library and information science degrees and a place where they could enter a degree not represented in the offered list. This question was to determine whether the respondent met the first requirement for participation in the survey, which was to hold a Master's degree from an American Library Association-accredited library school or its equivalent.

55

Those that indicated their degree was in progress, or that they did not have a Master's-level degree, were removed by list-wise deletion from the overall response set. Results are shown in the following table.

Table 6. Library-related degrees

Degree Option	Response Rate	%
MLS	44	57.1%
MLIS	23	29.9%
MIS	2	2.6%
Other	8	10.4%
Total	77	100%

For the eight respondents that selected "Other," the responses included Master of Science in Information Science (or Systems, or Studies) (2), Master of Science in Library Science (or Studies), Master of Science in Library and Information Science (or Studies), Artium Magister (Latin for "Master of Arts"), Artium Magister in Library Science (or Studies), a Master of Library Science equivalent from the United Kingdom, and one person who listed that they have a second Master of Arts in International Studies.

Q2: How many fieldwork students have you supervised at a public library during the last five years?

In order to ensure that respondents met the second criterion for participating in the survey, this question asked how many fieldwork students they have supervised. Any

responses of "None" were removed by list-wise deletion from the overall response set. The remaining results are shown in the following table.

Table 7. Number of fieldwork students supervised in past five years

Answer	Response Rate	%
1-2	48	62.3%
3-4	16	20.8%
5 or more	13	16.9%
Total	77	100%

Most respondents indicated that they have supervised one or two fieldwork students in the past five years. Eighty three percent have supervised up to four fieldwork students.

Q3: In what year did you receive your degree?

Respondents were invited to indicate during which decade they received their library degree.

Table 8. Year degree received

Year Range	Response Rate	%
1960-1969	1	1.3%
1970-1979	10	13%
1980-1989	12	15.6%
1990-1999	19	24.7%

Table 8 (continued)

2000-2009	32	41.5%
2010-present	3	3.9%
Total	77	100%

The most common decade of degree attainment is the 2000s (41.5%), followed by the

1990s (24.7%). Over 70% of respondents received degrees between 1990 and 2009. No

respondents indicated receiving a degree before 1960. Table 9 compares the number of

fieldwork students supervised compared to the year degree received.

Table 9. Comparison of students supervised to year degree received

Year Range/ Number Supervised	1 to 2	3 to 4	5 or more	Total
1960-1969	1	0	0	1
1970-1979	5	3	2	10
1980-1989	4	4	4	12
1990-1999	16	2	1	19
2000-2009	19	7	6	32
2010-present	3	0	0	3
Total	48	16	13	77

The respondent who received a degree between 1960 and 1969 has only supervised 1 or 2

fieldwork students. Supervisors who attained their degrees between 2000 and 2009 have

supervised the most fieldwork students.

58

Q4: Which of these best describes your position at the public library?

Further demographic information was solicited by asking what position the respondents held at their public libraries.

Table 10. Positions held

Position	Response Rate	%
Branch/Department Manager	33	42.8%
Director	8	10.4%
Public Services Librarian	7	9.1%
Children's Librarian	6	7.8%
Reference Librarian	3	3.9%
Adult Services Librarian	3	3.9%
Technical Services Librarian	2	2.6%
Other	15	19.5%
Total	77	100%

Most respondents hold the position of Branch/Department Manager. For the fifteen respondents that selected "Other," the responses included Teen Services/Teen/Tween & Teen Librarian (5), Genealogy Librarian, Assistant Director (2), Adult Services Coordinator, Digital Projects Librarian, Acquisitions Librarian, Reference and Teen Librarian. Some responses in the "Other" text box were Manager, Librarian Supervisor, and Director, and the researcher believes that those options were provided as responses in the original list.

Q5: Are you familiar with these knowledge and competency statements provided by library professional organizations?

Competency statements are created by various library associations, and practitioners may or may not be familiar with the perceived requirements of professional librarians. These competencies could serve as a foundation for a fieldwork experience. Reported familiarity of the fieldwork supervisor with these is indicated in table 11. Respondents were permitted to select more than one response.

Table 11. Competency familiarity

Competencies	Response Rate	%
ALA Core Competences for Librarianship	67	87%
RUSA Professional Competencies for Reference and User Services Librarians	36	46.8%
YALSA Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth	34	44.2%
ALSC Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Public Libraries	33	42.9%
Other	3	3.9%

Three respondents selected "Other," but only two of them listed separate competency sets not offered as choices. These were the New Jersey Library Association's Core Competencies and the "Missouri Library Standards from the 1980s."

Survey Section 2 – Initial Assessment

The seven questions in this section were concerned with the initial stages of the fieldwork experience, and inquired as to the desirable qualities of a fieldwork student, activities generally performed on the first day, and goal-setting. Choices were provided through radio button and checkbox options for three questions, with text boxes included for further provision of information. Two questions required the respondent to click and drag options in order to rank the options by preference. There were two questions that were completely open-ended to elicit responses about the preferred method of discovery of student abilities and perceived success of the initial student assessment.

Q6: What do you look for in a fieldwork student?

Supervisors were given the opportunity to select as many responses as they felt were necessary to explain what qualities they wished to find in a fieldwork student. There was a text box for additional responses not provided in the list.

Table 12. Student qualities

Competencies	Response Rate	%
Interest in certain area of librarianship	69	89.7%
Personality	50	64.9%
Availability/matching schedule	45	58.4%
Value to library needs	39	50.6%

Table 12 (continued)

Courses they have taken	28	36.4%
Free labor	14	18.2%
Grades received in coursework	1	1.3%
Other	18	23.4%

Almost a quarter of respondents selected "Other" and wrote in more qualities. Enthusiasm and willingness were most often written here, with six responses. The next highest response was relevant prior experience with two responses. Other qualities desired include skills, willingness to work evenings or weekends, and customer service focus.

Q7: What occurs on your typical "first day" with a fieldwork student?

Supervisors were given the opportunity to select as many responses as they felt were necessary to explain what occurs on a characteristic first day with fieldwork students. There was a text box for additional responses not provided in the list.

Table 13. Typical first day activities

Activity	Response Rate	%
Introductions to staff	71	92.2%
Tour of library	70	90.9%
Discussions of expectations	69	89.6%
Discussion of goals/learning objectives	65	84.4%

Table 13 (continued)

Training on integrated library system	26	33.8%
Discussion on what student has learned in school	18	23.4%
Put into assignments right away	13	16.9%
Review of coursework	4	5.2%
Other	15	19.5%

Additional activities provided by respondents include discussion of projects, visits to other branches, observation, clarification of scheduling, discussion about the library's community, and the procurement of an ID badge.

Q8: How do you discover what your fieldwork student already knows about library work?

This question asked the supervisor to rank each applicable option to determine the most popular methods of assessing what a fieldwork student already knows. Sixty eight respondents answered this question.

Table 14. Method of initial student assessment

Method	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank 7
Discussion with student	**63**	5	0	0	0	0	0
Discussion with fellow library staff after student begins	0	**43**	12	8	5	0	0

Table 14 (continued)

Discussion with faculty at library school	1	9	**27**	16	11	4	0
Discussion with staff at library school	0	0	6	**26**	**25**	9	2
Analysis of student's transcript	1	6	14	7	24	14	2
No discussion at all	0	2	4	9	1	**40**	12
Other	3	3	5	2	2	1	**52**

The primary method of initial student assessment was through discussion with the fieldwork student, followed by discussion with library staff. Discussion with faculty and staff at library schools and analysis of student transcripts shared similar rankings for the third, fourth and fifth most common methods of initial student assessment. Most respondents chose "no discussion at all" as one of the least common methods. Fifty two respondents put "other" as the least used method.

Twenty respondents wrote something in the text box. A few offered clarifications to the rankings they made, and some did offer other methods of initial student assessment, including observation, questions about non-library work skills, and reviewing a student's letter of application to the fieldwork experience and resume.

Q9: Why did you rank your #1 choice as the most used method in the question above?

This question was presented with an open-ended text box for the respondent to elucidate the reason that his or her first choice in the question about methods of initial

assessment ranked at the top of the list, and garnered seventy three responses. More than half of these supervisors emphasized that a conversation with a student is the best way of determining his or her capabilities. One respondent summarized:

What better way to gauge capability than conversation?

And others explained:

Because the student is the best source of that information.

Students are usually eager to let me know what they know.

Some respondents indicated their interactions with library school faculty and staff were not plentiful:

Never interact with library school staff.

There is usually no invitation to discuss the student with library school faculty.

I have only once met with a faculty person from the library school.

We rarely have any discussions with the library school.

I've had little to no contact with faculty while supervising interns.

Only one person ranked as number one the analysis of a fieldwork student's transcript. That respondent indicated his or her reason:

Before I take on fieldwork students, I go through transcripts. I won't take anyone on who hasn't completed the basic coursework.

Q10: How do you know that your initial assessment of the student was successful?

Another open-ended text box question followed. This was to gauge the perceived success of the fieldwork supervisor's initial assessment of the student. With seventy one responses, a very strong reason emerged – observation or monitoring.

After discussion with the student and introduction to library work assignments, I compare the information provided by the student and the work performance. If they seem to match, my initial assessment was successful.

More than one respondent says that their own experiences are how they know initial assessments are successful. One example is:

From years of experience working with the public and having been a student. Like in an interview, one can spot the ones who are jumping through hoops for the sake of exercise instead of finding a way to get the most out of a task, the ones with social idiosyncrasies that may work better behind the scenes than working directly with the public, those who understand that nothing about library work is about "us" - it is always about serving a community, whether in a special, school, academic or public library. I have seldom been wrong when assessing

communication style, best place for someone to work within a public library, or

the degree of sincerity about being in a profession that changes every day.

Other methods included meetings with the student, discussion with fellow library staff,

work results, and gauging what additional supervision the student required. Two

respondents mentioned giving a written exam to their fieldwork students. Another simply

"hopes for the best."

Q11: Do you set goals or student learning objectives for your fieldwork student?

In order to determine whether or not the fieldwork supervisor utilized goals or

student learning objectives in the experience, respondents were given two choices, and

results are presented in the following table. Whether or not goals or student learning

objectives are created could affect what assessment criteria are employed.

Table 15. Setting goals or student learning objectives

Answer	Response Rate	%
Yes	64	83.1%
No	13	16.9%
Total	77	100%

The majority of respondents (83.1%) report that they do set goals or learning objectives

for their or with their students.

Q12: How do you set these goals (student learning objectives)?

For this question, sixty five respondents prioritized how they set the goals or student learning objectives for the fieldwork experience. Five options were given, plus a choice of "no goals set" and a text box where the supervisor could write a response not in the list.

Table 16. Methods of goal setting

Method	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank 7
Discussion with student	**45**	18	2	0	0	0	0
Discussion with fellow library staff	4	**24**	25	11	1	0	0
Discussion with faculty at library school	1	6	22	**30**	5	1	0
Discussion with staff at library school	0	0	3	16	**39**	7	0
Review of fieldwork course syllabus	7	16	11	4	16	11	0
No goals set	7	0	0	3	2	**46**	7
Other	1	1	2	1	2	0	**58**

Forty five out of 65 respondents (69.2%) ranked a discussion with fieldwork students as the main way that they set goals for the fieldwork experience. Discussion with fellow library staff and discussion with faculty at library schools ranked as the next most popular methods. The least ranked was to review a syllabus for the fieldwork course.

Only a few respondents included text for the "Other" selection, and wrote that they contact the student advisor, go by what is mandated by faculty instead of setting goals, or created the goals with the fieldwork student in a meeting held before the fieldwork begins. All three of these were choices presented in the table, so the inclusion of them in "Other" is redundant.

Survey Section 3 – Student Progress

The next section of the survey contained five questions about interactions with the fieldwork student, designing assignments, the 2009 *Core Competences of Librarianship* from the American Library Association (ALA), and an inquiry as to the perceived success of assignments. These questions were formatted similarly to previous questions in the survey, and the section included two ranking questions, one open-ended question, and one with checkboxes. A new type of question appeared in this section, and it asked the respondent to assign percentages, totaling 100%, to the eight competencies from the ALA *Core Competences* document to indicate how much time the competencies are incorporated into assignments.

Q13: After determining what the student knows, how do you design assignments for the fieldwork students you supervise?

This question required respondents to rank items; in this case it was ranking the manner in which they designed assignments for their fieldwork students. A total of 62 supervisors completed this question.

69

Table 17. Methods of designing assignments

Method	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank 7
Discuss options with student	**34**	20	6	1	1	0	0
Speak with other library staff about potential assignments	18	**28**	12	3	1	0	0
Tasks arise from the needs of the library, regardless of wishes of the student	2	1	5	**27**	20	6	1
Tasks arise from the needs of the library, and are related to wishes of the student	7	12	**30**	13	0	0	0
Follow guidance from library school	1	1	8	14	**32**	5	1
Every student does the same assignments	0	0	0	2	8	**48**	4
Other	0	0	1	2	0	3	**56**

The most popular method of designing assignments noted was through discussion with the fieldwork student, followed by speaking with library staff about assignments. The next most popular method was to craft assignments based on the needs of the library in relation to the student's wishes. Most supervisors indicated that having each student complete the same assignments is the least popular method.

For the respondents who wrote information in the text box for "Other," only one listed a true extraneous choice, which was that they review past assignments that other fieldwork students have had and have been successful.

Q14: How do students participate in assignments?

This question gathered information about the ways in which fieldwork students participate in their assignments. A total of 59 supervisors completed this question.

Table 18. Methods of student participation

Method	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
Shadowing a staff person without intrusion	10	8	15	17	7	2
Interactive observation of staff	15	**23**	16	3	1	1
Hands-on tasks	**20**	21	9	9	0	0
Orientations/Training sessions	14	7	**17**	20	1	0
Written research on assigned topics	0	0	2	7	**45**	5
Other	0	0	0	3	5	**51**

While it is easy to see from these results that written research on assigned topics ranked low as a method of student participation, it is harder to discern what the single most popular was. Hands-on tasks did rank highest as the first method chosen, but while a total of 50 respondents marked it in their top three methods, the method of interactive observation of staff garnered 54 respondents marking it in the top three methods.

71

One respondent offered more detail about the ways his or her fieldwork students participate:

We work our way down from an orientation to shadowing to interactive observation to hands-on assignments. By the end, the student is completing many hands-on assignments that he/she is responsible for.

Another listed a method that may be replicated elsewhere:

Students are encouraged to interview staff members who are working in areas that they are interested in, like adult or youth services.

Q15: Please think about the ALA Core Competences of Librarianship. How much time during the fieldwork experience are the following competencies incorporated in duties or assignments?

The American Library Association's *Core Competences of Librarianship* is a guiding document that defines "the knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from ALA-accredited masters' programs in library and information studies" (American Library Association 2009). As these are implied requirements for library and information science students, this question sought to determine how much time spent in a fieldwork experience incorporates these competencies. The competencies are listed in table 19 in the same order as in the document itself.

Table 19. Fieldwork time spent incorporating ALA Core Competences

Competency	Minimum Time	Maximum Time	Average Time
Foundations of profession	0%	50%	9.57%
Information resources	0%	50%	16.54%
Organization of recorded knowledge and information	0%	70%	11.57%
Technological knowledge and skills	3%	70%	19.52%
Reference and user services	0%	70%	22.22%
Research	0%	25%	7.44%
Continuing education and lifelong learning	0%	50%	6.73%
Administration and management	0%	30%	6.40%
Total			99.99%

Sixty two respondents input percentages totaling 100% to demonstrate how much time during the fieldwork experience the above competencies were incorporated into their students' duties. The only competency that every respondent indicated time spent was "Technological knowledge and skills." On average, the most amount of time is spent in "Reference and user services" and "Technological knowledge and skills," and the least in "Administration and management" and "Continuing education."

Q16: What other topics do you discuss with your students?

In addition to the prescribed competencies put forth in the ALA *Core Competences*, respondents were asked about what other concepts they incorporated into

their supervisory activities. Results of sixty two respondents are included in the following table.

Table 20. Topics discussed with students

Answer	Response Rate	%
Personal characteristics such as attitude and work ethic	52	84%
Mentoring opportunities	45	73%
Communication Skills	44	71%
Professional organizations and development opportunities	43	69%
Job placement opportunities	42	68%
Setting personal goals	40	65%
Time management	39	63%
Experiences in different classes	38	61%
Networking	37	60%
Their professors	14	23%
Other	10	16%

The most frequent topics were personal characteristics, mentoring opportunities, communication skills, professional organizations, and job placement opportunities. Only 14 of 62 selected the fieldwork students' professors as a topic of discussion.

Because respondents could choose more than one topic, a number of the prescribed topics rose to the top. As one respondent put it:

Libraries are changing; you need more than technology and library skills. You need people skills and the ability to adapt and change and encourage that in all aspects of library work.

Other topics written into the text box included graphic design, presentation skills, previous employment, program development, management styles, leadership, and funding sources. One offered a philosophical topic:

Losing the use of "I" and replacing it with "we." No one achieves anything in the library world alone and should never present knowledge ... that way.

Q17: How do you know when your assignments are successful?

This open-ended text box question was answered by 56 respondents. One respondent stated that they do not know if assignments are successful, but all of the other respondents were able to state a multitude of reasons. These included student feedback, customer feedback, discussion with fellow staff, review of finished products, and completion of a written component or portfolio.

One respondent made mention of gauging assignment success through meeting the fieldwork student later in the student's career:

When I meet them at professional meetings and they tell me where they are and what they have done.

Aside from informal progress reports, general discussion with customers, staff, and the student, two indicated that they use formal assessment methods, such as a "pre- and post-program measurement toward specific objectives," and a "midterm progress report, final summary of their experience, and evaluation done for credit (grade)."

Survey Section 4 – Student Assessment

The next section contained nine questions centered on evaluation. Frequency, method, and student involvement were the foci of these questions, and the section ended with an open-ended query about the supervisor's perceived success of evaluating the fieldwork student. Seven questions utilized radio buttons, one used checkboxes, and the last was an open-ended text box.

Q18: How do you formally evaluate your student?

Sixty one fieldwork supervisors indicated the method through which they formally evaluate their students, as represented in the following table.

Table 21. Methods of formal student evaluation

Method	Response Rate	%
Complete evaluation form provided by library school	45	73.7%
Produce a written report	7	11.5%
Provide a suggested grade without a report	3	4.9%

Table 21 (continued)

Do not perform formal evaluation	2	3.3%
Other	4	6.6%
Total	61	100%

The majority indicated that they utilize the evaluation form provided by the library school as their method of formal evaluation. Of the four that responded "Other," three indicated that they complete whatever is requested by the library school, which was one of the original options. The fourth, however, provided a more unique response:

At completion of assignment (I) take them to lunch and give them a frank and open discussion on (the) success of projects and observations and criticism on their approach to projects and interaction with staff and people involved.

Q19: How do you informally evaluate your student?

Sixty one fieldwork supervisors also indicated the informal methods through which they evaluate their students.

Table 22. Methods of informal student evaluation

Method	Response Rate	%
Get input from library staff	37	60.6%
Compare student to past fieldwork students	5	8.2%
Compare student against ALA Competencies	4	6.6%

Table 22 (continued)

Compare student to yourself	2	3.3%
Other	13	21.3%
Total	61	100%

The most frequently used informal method was to get input from library staff. In fact, more respondents said they use that method than all of the other methods combined.

More respondents indicated in "Other" a different method through which they informally evaluate their fieldwork students. The most common method noted was through discussion with students. One said they "compare student to my own expectations of what makes a good librarian" and another compared fieldwork students to volunteers.

Q20: How many times during the student's fieldwork term do you formally evaluate them?

In order to ascertain how many formal evaluations occur in the fieldwork experience, respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of student evaluation during the experience. Sixty one responses are summarized in table 23 below.

Table 23. Frequency of formal evaluation

Number of Times	Response Rate	%
Never	6	9.8%
One	32	52.5%
Two	19	31.1%
Three or more	4	6.6%
Total	61	100%

The majority (52.5%) of fieldwork supervisors formally evaluate their students only one time during the experience, with the next most frequency being twice (31.1%). About one-tenth of the respondents never conduct a formal evaluation of their fieldwork students.

Q21: Do you normally conduct a formal mid-term evaluation with the student?

Respondents were only given two choices on this question about formal mid-term evaluations, and results are presented in the following table.

Table 24. Provision of formal mid-term evaluation

Answer	Response Rate	%
Yes	24	39.3%
No	37	60.7%
Total	61	100%

The majority of respondents (60.7%) reported that they do not conduct formal mid-term evaluations.

Q22: If so, do you use the results to change the planned assignments and activities?

Those who indicated that they did offer a formal mid-term evaluation were asked if they used the results of said evaluation to modify the original assignments and activities of the fieldwork experience.

Table 25. Use of formal mid-term evaluation to change assignments

Answer	Response Rate	%
Yes	22	91.7%
No	2	8.3%
Total	24	100%

Of the 24 who indicated in the previous question that they do conduct formal mid-term evaluations, 22 (91.7%) reported that they use the results of that particular evaluation to change the planned assignments and activities for the rest of the fieldwork experience.

Q23: Do you involve the fieldwork student in creating a formal mid-term or final evaluation?

This question ascertained whether the fieldwork supervisor involves students in creating formal evaluations. Sixty supervisors responded, as indicated in table 26.

80

Table 26. Involvement of student in creating evaluations

Frequency	Response Rate	%
Never	21	35%
Infrequently	7	11.7%
Sometimes	18	30%
Frequently	6	10%
Always	8	13.3%
Total	60	100%

One-third of respondents never involve the student in creation of a mid-term or final evaluation, while fourteen frequently or always involve the student.

Q24: Are satisfaction or completion of goals/student learning objectives agreed on at the beginning of the fieldwork experience part of your final evaluation?

Sixty one respondents chose between yes, no, and not applicable to indicate whether or not the goals set at the beginning of the fieldwork experience are included in the final evaluation. An option of "not applicable" was provided for supervisors who do not set initial goals.

Table 27. Use of initials goals as part of final evaluation

Answer	Response Rate	%
Yes	51	83.6%
No	3	4.9%
Not applicable	7	11.5%
Total	61	100%

The majority (83.6%) of supervisors reported that they do use those initial goals or student learning objectives as part of the final evaluation. If the respondents whose answer was "not applicable" are removed from the sample set, then the percentage of those that use initial goals in the final evaluation rises to 94.4%.

Q25: How do you determine that the student satisfied the goals/student learning objectives agreed upon at the beginning of the fieldwork experience?

Sixty fieldwork supervisors provided feedback about the manner in which they determine whether or not the student satisfied the goals agreed upon at the beginning of the fieldwork experience. Respondents were allowed to select as many methods as they deemed appropriate, and also could enter more into a text box.

Table 28. Methods of determining satisfaction of original goals

Method	Response Rate	%
Observation of performance	57	95%
Discussion with student	52	86.7%
Review of work products	51	85%
Use of rubric	8	13.3%
Other	6	10%

Observation ranked as the highest method through which to determine satisfaction of original goals, followed by discussion with the fieldwork student and review of work products. Five of six respondents who entered additional information in the text box reported that discussion with library staff is a method they use, and the final respondent said they determine satisfaction of goals by whether or not the student met the goals that were "faculty-driven."

Q26: How do you know that your final evaluation was successful?

For this question, 47 respondents wrote in an open-ended text box their thoughts and feelings about how they know their final evaluations of the fieldwork students were successful. Nine of these indicated that they don't know at all, especially if they never have contact with the fieldwork student again. The majority reported success of evaluations by feedback from the student and completion of work products and goals.

One reported that they know the evaluation is successful if "the library school is satisfied with the results." Others mentioned the library school as well, saying that they get "brief feedback from the faculty" or are told the "final grade from the instructor." Another trend in these responses was that supervisors deemed their evaluations successful if the students kept in touch post-fieldwork.

Survey Section 5 – Final Thoughts

The final section of the survey had nine questions centered on the supervisor's own experiences and feelings about supervision of fieldwork students. Five of these used radio buttons, and one used checkboxes. Three were open-ended text boxes, including one where the respondent could provide contact information for the opportunity to be invited by the researcher to participate in a follow-up interview through which to gain more details about how the respondent conducts the fieldwork experiences.

Q27: If you participated in a fieldwork experience for your library-related degree, did your experience influence how you handle current fieldwork students?

Respondents were given the options of yes, no, or "didn't have a field experience" to state whether or not their own fieldwork experience influenced how they handle the students they supervise.

Table 29. Supervisor's fieldwork experience influence on supervision

Answer	Response Rate	%
Yes	31	50.8%
No	8	13.1%
Didn't have a field experience as part of my degree	22	36.1%
Total	61	100%

Just over one-third (36.1%) of the respondents did not participate in a fieldwork experience as part of their library-related degree. Half (50.8%) of the respondents indicated that their own experience in fieldwork affected how they handle supervising fieldwork students. How that occurred is covered in the next question.

Q28: In what ways did your own fieldwork experience influence how you handle current fieldwork students?

There were 36 responses to this question, but ten of them were statements about the non-applicability of this question to them. The remaining 26 responses to this open-ended text box question fell into two categories: positive and negative. The positive remarks mentioned having a well-rounded experience, the attainment of hands-on experiences, the appreciation of a mentor, and that a varied fieldwork experience in multiple departments is helpful. Negative responses included being given menial tasks, being treated as free labor, and that being thrown straight into work is difficult.

Q29: Regarding supervision of fieldwork students, how often do you have important skills that you try to teach others?

This question aimed to discern whether or not the supervisor feels that they have important skills that they try to teach others, especially in regards to supervision of fieldwork students.

Table 30. Supervisor feelings of teaching important skills to others

Frequency	Response Rate	%
Never	0	0%
Infrequently	0	0%
Sometimes	6	10%
Frequently	29	48.3%
Always	25	41.7%
Total	60	100%

Of the 60 respondents, the majority felt that they frequently or always have important skills that they try to teach to others. None felt that they infrequently or never have skills they try to teach others.

Q30: Regarding supervision of fieldwork students, how often do you try to pass along the knowledge you have gained through your personal experiences?

The next question was presented to determine how often the supervisor tries to pass along knowledge gained through his or her personal experience. Sixty respondents indicated their thoughts on how often they tried to share this knowledge.

Table 31. Supervisor feelings of passing knowledge gained through experience

Frequency	Response Rate	%
Never	0	0%
Infrequently	1	1.7%
Sometimes	2	3.3%
Frequently	23	38.3%
Always	34	56.7%
Total	60	100%

More than half (56.7%) of the 60 respondents stated that they always try to pass along knowledge gained through personal experience, while, on the opposing end, one indicates that they do this infrequently.

Q31: Regarding supervision of fieldwork students, how often do you feel as though you have made a difference to many students?

Respondents were presented with this question to see whether or not they feel they have made a difference to fieldwork students, and how frequently this occurs.

Table 32. Supervisor feelings of making a difference to many students

Frequency	Response Rate	%
Never	0	0%
Infrequently	4	6.6%
Sometimes	16	26.2%
Frequently	26	42.6%
Always	15	24.6%
Total	61	100%

Of the 61 respondents, most (67.2%) stated that they frequently or always feel that they make a difference to many fieldwork students. Although four felt that they infrequently make a difference, no respondents indicated that they never feel they make a difference to fieldwork students.

Q32: Regarding supervision of fieldwork students, how often do you think that you will be remembered by the student?

This question was offered to gauge whether the fieldwork supervisor feels they will be remembered by fieldwork students.

Table 33. Supervisor feelings of potential of being remembered by students

Frequency	Response Rate	%
Never	0	0%
Infrequently	6	10%
Sometimes	21	35%

Table 33 (continued)

Frequently	21	35%
Always	12	20%
Total	60	100%

An equal number of respondents said they sometimes or frequently will be remembered by their fieldwork students. None indicated that they thought they would never be remembered by students, and one-fifth felt they would always be remembered by their fieldwork students.

Q33: How do you gauge that you conducted a useful fieldwork experience?

Sixty one supervisors responded to this question about determining the usefulness of a fieldwork experience, and were allowed to select as many answers as applied.

Table 34. Methods of determining usefulness of fieldwork experience

Method	Response Rate	%
Student met goals/student learning objectives	51	83.6%
Evaluation from student	42	68.9%
Continued involvement with fieldwork students from same library school	37	60.7%
Personal satisfaction	33	54.1%
Evaluation from fellow library staff/peers	21	34.4%
Other	11	18%

The most frequently chosen method of how a supervisor determines the usefulness of the fieldwork experience was through satisfaction of goals or student learning objectives. Next was through evaluation from the students. Personal satisfaction as a method of determining the usefulness of a fieldwork experience was chosen by just over half of the respondents.

Eleven respondents marked "Other" and wrote alternative methods in a text box. These methods included the continuation of a fieldwork student as a volunteer, by being willing to hire the student after fieldwork, and being used as a reference by the student.

Q34: Please give any overall thoughts or feelings you have about supervising fieldwork students.

Fifty four respondents entered comments into this open-ended text box describing overall thoughts and feelings regarding supervision of fieldwork students. It was deemed important by the researcher to provide a space through which the respondent could offer thoughts and feelings about supervision of fieldwork that the respondent couldn't convey elsewhere in the survey. By grouping these comments into thematic areas, the researcher was able to see patterns and consistencies in feelings of the fieldwork supervisor regarding the benefits of the experience, personal thoughts, and potential negative aspects that can be worked through.

Many respondents mentioned the benefits of the fieldwork experience for the students, and some also stated that fieldwork benefits the supervisors, libraries, and

library schools as well. A common thought was that hands-on, or real-life, experience was extremely valuable. Students "gain a better understanding and work experience they can use on a resume." More than one response indicated that supervision of fieldwork students was a "win-win" situation for the students and libraries. Regarding benefits to the supervisors, one respondent says "Fieldwork students help current staff keep up with trends in librarianship." Another states they "enjoy having a fresh face who brings a different perspective" and that they do "appreciate the free labor" and hard work of the student.

The supervisors' personal thoughts were also a common thread amongst the responses. One expressed the need for more experience in supervising practica. Satisfaction was expressed through comments such as "it's a great feeling," "consistently a pleasure," and "I love it." Three incorporated the concept of giving back to the profession, or, in other words, "paying it forward to the future of the profession."

There were only a few negative comments regarding supervision of fieldwork students. These were directed at the students themselves, and their lack of skills:

I am surprised by the lack [of] personal presentation skills in communicating with peers and their ability to convey their skills and knowledge.

Supervising fieldwork students can be difficult because their expectations may be different than what the library can provide.

91

Many students do not want to intern at our library since we are a rural city. We generally struggle with a student's ability to make good marketing materials (poor graphic design skills) and also with pie-in-the-sky ideas they want to try out as programs.

A few respondents mentioned library schools in their responses, and were generally negative. There was one opinion that all library schools should provide fieldwork. Another was that library schools do not adequately prepare fieldwork students for the realities of daily work. One fieldwork supervisor complained that some schools are "more organized than others in [their] support materials and contact people that they provide for the field supervisor." Finally, one respondent bemoaned what specifically is not taught in the academic program:

I don't think library schools are doing a good job of teaching marketing, management of employees, budgeting, problem patron management, and numerous other real world issues to students.

Q35: If you are willing to be contacted for a follow up interview regarding how you conduct your fieldwork experiences, please provide your name, email, and/or phone number here.

Thirty seven fieldwork supervisors offered contact information to volunteer for follow-up interviews. Those are discussed in Part Two of this chapter.

Part Two – Interviews

The online survey provided data about fieldwork supervisors, their initial interactions with their fieldwork students, what activities make up a fieldwork experience, and how they assess their students. In order to further elucidate these results and gain more personal responses, the researcher wrote five follow-up questions to provide via an interview to any respondent who volunteered to participate. The interview questions echoed questions from the online survey, and served to offer insight into specific feelings of the respondents, activities as related to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, and thoughts about the supervisors' roles in the experience.

Of the respondents who completed the online survey, thirty seven provided contact information to state that they were willing to participate in the follow-up interview. Thirty of these confirmed participation after contact by the researcher. Two respondents elected to complete the interview by phone; of the remaining, 28 chose to complete a questionnaire. The researcher received 23 completed questionnaires, making a total of twenty five interviews completed, which comprised 32.5% of the original 77 respondents to the survey. Interview data was coded by two volunteers coders enrolled at Texas Woman's University, who completed a checklist matrix for each interview response.

Q1: What role do you see yourself in when supervising a fieldwork student? Do you see yourself as more of a supervisor, teacher, mentor…?

A role has the potential to be assumed by the supervisor, or assigned to the fieldwork supervisor by the student. This first question was meant to elicit the specific personal feelings of the fieldwork supervisor of his or her perceived position, part, or function in the fieldwork experience. A few suggestions were given in case the respondent didn't understand the question.

Most respondents only identified a few roles in answering this question. The most frequently appearing role was 'mentor,' which 17 respondents indicated they saw as their role. This was followed by 'supervisor' with ten respondents, and 'teacher' with seven. Roles with more than one response are represented in table 35.

Table 35. Highest recurring perceived roles of fieldwork supervisors

Role	Response Rate	%
Mentor	17	68%
Supervisor	10	40%
Teacher	7	28%
Colleague	4	16%
Trainer	2	8%

Other roles that appeared a single time each in the replies to this question include advisor, coach, contact, coordinator, co-worker, facilitator, guidance counselor, leader, resource, specialist, and working professional. In addition to stating a specific role, more than one respondent explained that they didn't necessarily fit a particular role, indicating that they

were "not really trying to teach" and "not exactly a supervisor." One said that they were "somewhere between teacher and mentor."

Activities of mentoring presented by the respondents included giving the fieldwork students a professional direction, "helping them find their way," and instilling the concept of career goals. Some referred to the development of critical thinking and decision-making skills, and others specifically addressed networking and professional development. More than one said they wanted to guide fieldwork students whilst they find their own strengths and weaknesses, letting the students explore the field on their own.

Mentions were made by respondents as to serving in a divergent role from faculty. Rather than learning from "theories handed down from professors," the fieldwork supervisor aids students in gaining experience in day-to-day activities, and "knowledge that the student cannot gain in the classroom." On the other hand, one respondent said that he or she have had to actually teach a fieldwork student "quite a bit about things like collection development if they didn't cover it in their grad classes."

Q2: How do you know what a student is capable of when you first start working with them?

The second question elicited explanation of the beginning of the fieldwork experience, and here interview respondents were given the opportunity to describe how

they ascertain the abilities and personal qualities of fieldwork students. The shortest response flatly stated that "I do not know what the student is capable of."

By far the most frequent method through which a fieldwork supervisor determines what the student is capable of was through an interview, talking, or conversation about interests, goals, and experience. Eighteen of 25 respondents mentioned this in their answers. One respondent said that they let the student tell them what the student is capable of, then used that as a basis from which to assign tasks and create new assignments. Six respondents spoke of personal perception as a method through which to evaluate the students' personal qualities and abilities. In fact, one wrote that they specifically could "feel it," and another believed they can tell a fieldwork student's capabilities within the first ten to twenty minutes of meeting them.

Some fieldwork supervisors put the burden of capability display on their students and the library school. They refer to the resumes, applications, and other documentation that the student provides to the fieldwork supervisor. They also read the students' transcripts, and speak with advisors or faculty at the library school before assigning tasks. After the fieldwork student has started performing tasks at the library, the supervisor observes task performance, and gauges how quickly the student picks up on quality standards and how accurately they complete assignments. The desire for more information was expressed by one supervisor, who said that he or she wished the student would enter the fieldwork experience with perhaps a portfolio, a project proposal, or

other supporting materials so he or she would know more about specific capabilities instead of just what is gleaned from a conversation.

One supervisor starts the fieldwork experience as if the student is brand new to library-work, ignoring the degree program the student has participated in and begins with basic training. It is through this method that the supervisor believes they identify capabilities and enthusiasm for skills. On the other hand, some supervisors said that because the student has been through a library school program (assuming the fieldwork comes near the end of the curriculum), they believe the fieldwork student should have high capability and knowledge already. One stated that they "have an expectation that [the fieldwork student has] already learned most of the basics of librarianship," and another "assumes they know a lot because" they are at the end of his or her schooling.

Q3: What do you do during the fieldwork experience to guide the students? Can you be more specific about the activities that you have your students do?

This question was specifically designed to determine how the fieldwork experience aligns with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory, in which the fieldwork supervisor as a "more knowledgeable other" would bring the student through specific exercises in order to bridge a gap of knowledge through collaborative activities (Vygotsky 1987). A follow-up question is provided to prompt for precise description of the fieldwork student's undertakings. One supervisor stated "I don't" in response to this question, but the remaining respondents did offer methods and activities.

97

Many different techniques were given by the respondents to this question to discuss how they guide fieldwork students. Orientation is often the first activity students participate in. Shadowing and observation were most often cited as the method through which the students interacted in the beginnings of fieldwork experiences. Conversely, one fieldwork supervisor said they shadow the student instead of the other way around. Students are encouraged to work with multiple people and become exposed to many departments. One interviewee creates a team of consultants for the fieldwork student, while another pairs each student with a professional librarian.

Many fieldwork supervisors hold regular meetings with students in order to discuss projects, check work and review quality, and to give feedback to improve performance. Another technique is to use the goals set at the beginning of a fieldwork experience to solicit feedback from the students. Supervisors make themselves available for consultation and guidance, but allow the fieldwork student to take responsibility for his or her own work.

Respondents indicated that they create teachable moments through which the fieldwork student watches, then assists, then leads in activities. Supervisors encourage the students to practice and repeat tasks and processes in order to bridge to independent work after one-on-one training in core tasks, whilst the supervisors stay available for questions, feedback, and encouragement. One fieldwork supervisor said his or her students are encouraged to track progress on projects in a project management system. As students

demonstrate more competency, they spend more time unsupervised, changing from observers to full participants, and from group work to solo activities.

As far as specific activities assigned to fieldwork students, the respondents typically indicated tasks related to day-to-day operations. As one fieldwork supervisor put it, the student gets "tours of duty at the various service desks," including reference, youth, and circulation desks, and works in multiple departments. Although a few respondents said they give students a list of projects to choose from, others listed standard projects in which all fieldwork students participate.

Aspects of youth and adult program responsibilities are often assigned to fieldwork students, including program set-up, creation and design, assistance, and simple observation. Multiple types of programs were mentioned specifically, including children, young adult and teen, adult, summer reading clubs, and technology classes. Collection management activities also appeared frequently, with respondents indicating that their students had responsibilities of maintaining budgets, evaluating collections, weeding, and recommending purchases.

Few respondents mentioned administrative or management duties with the exception of reviewing policies, attending board meetings, and observing staff meetings. On the other hand, a few respondents admitted that they had their students perform office work and clerical duties such as paper cutting and mailing postcards. Other assignments mentioned less often in the responses to this question included marketing tasks, designing

flyers and displays, updating readers' advisory lists, enhancing social media presence, creating metadata, and scanning documents. A few fieldwork supervisors indicated involving professional development in students' tasks by allocating time for the students to read professional journals and attend webinars.

Q4: Please explain how you grade/assess/evaluate the student throughout the experience?

Question four replicated and enhanced information provided in the online survey about formal and informal assessments of fieldwork students. This question elicited the most succinct responses from the supervisors as compared to the length of responses to the other four questions of the interview.

Half of the respondents noted using an evaluation form provided by the library school for assessing their students, but often augmenting these formal evaluations by providing informal feedback about progression and guidance on areas that need assistance during the entire fieldwork experience. The forms are lacking, however, in that they do not "include the kind of detail that a (fieldwork) student would want in dealing with specific real life issues and planning." Respondents complained of not getting much information or input from the schools themselves, saying "they weren't terribly involved" and "I wish library schools would give supervisors criteria and stuff at the beginning of practicum to tell us what the school is looking for in evaluation." Conversely, a few supervisors did indicate that they speak with the professors during the evaluation process.

While some respondents compared the fieldwork students to employees or treated them exactly like paid staff, another said that they are conscious of the fact that these students are not yet librarians, and thusly doesn't evaluate them as such. Rather, they get feedback from the students themselves, and sit down with them to discuss progress and feelings about projects. One stated that they conduct a formal exit interview with the student exactly as they would an employee.

Many respondents stated that assessment of their fieldwork students is an ongoing process that involves observing the growth of the students in project complexity, getting input from various staff with whom the students interacted during the fieldwork experience, and gauging the students' dedication and willingness to contribute. A few brought up stated learning objectives set at the beginning of the fieldwork experience, and indicated they conducted a mid-point check on progress towards the goals.

Q5: What do you think makes a fieldwork experience worthwhile or successful?

The last question of the interview provided respondents an opportunity to describe the reasons for which they feel their fieldwork experiences have been meaningful and useful. Respondents in the survey did indicate that their own personal experiences affected how they handle students and that they have expertise to share; this is reflected in some responses to this interview question as well.

Some supervisors defined success literally as accomplishing all tasks or gaining the credit hours for the fieldwork experience. However, others listed diverse reasons and

ideas about the value of fieldwork success. Some stated that they deem a fieldwork experience worthwhile if the student says so.

The most commonly recurring response theme to this question was the concept of putting theory into action and adding benefit to the fieldwork student's formal education. A fieldwork experience becomes worthwhile if the student learned things above and beyond classwork, expanded on theory, and got a real world taste of what's expected in the field. One summarized that fieldwork success is gaining "what you can't learn in library school," and another said success is "if the student is in the real world, in real life situations, and sees theory being put into practice." Another stated that "if the student considers the experience to be an added benefit to their formal education, if learning has occurred, and the student believes it to be a positive and professionally beneficial experience, then I would consider it to be a success."

Respondents explained the worth of the fieldwork experience as a benefit to their own growth or to their libraries. Getting fresh ideas from fieldwork students, knowing what is on trend in library schools, and being energized by student enthusiasm and interests are some of the things that make supervision of fieldwork students worthwhile. Sometimes this information comes from the library school reporting back to the fieldwork supervisor that they received positive feedback from the student. Supervisors also gauge the value of the fieldwork experience to the student by whether or not the student keeps in touch, if they refer other students to the supervisor for future fieldwork,

or if they continue to be involved at their libraries by volunteering. One respondent wrote that they solicit feedback from the fieldwork student so that they can improve his or her own mentoring skills.

Supervisors also measured success of fieldwork by whether the student is able to gain confidence and confirm his or her choice of career. By being involved in many departments and being exposed to a variety of tasks, "the student can make an informed decision about whether or not they would like working" in a library. Another said the worth of a fieldwork experience is "if the student gets a taste of the many facets of library work, and then feels prepared to accept a position when offered, then the experience should have been both worthwhile and successful." The motivation for supervising fieldwork students for one respondent is to "perpetuate a high standard of work in our profession."

Twenty five interview respondents provided varying perspectives and feelings towards the activities, the methods of assessment, and their attitudes about the usefulness and worth of the fieldwork experience. The last part of this chapter discusses the library school evaluation forms utilized by these supervisors in assessing the performance of fieldwork students.

Part Three – Library School Evaluation Forms

Forty seven evaluation forms were gathered by the researcher between April and June of 2012. Forms were found on schools' websites, or, if not available online, by

contacting the schools directly and requesting copies. The original list of schools was made from the ALA's 2011 *Directory of ALA-Accredited Master's Programs in Library and Information Science*. Forms were obtained from those schools whose websites were written in English. This eliminated two schools that have websites in French and Spanish. One school does not offer fieldwork as a curriculum option. Eight do not use a formalized written or online form. Therefore, out of 58 schools, a total of 47 forms were collected and analyzed. Analysis of the schools' forms allowed for corroboration of similar information covered in the surveys and interviews, and showed what the library schools are expecting the fieldwork supervisors to assess.

To categorize the content of the evaluation forms, the researcher replicated Coburn's 1980 analysis of library school evaluation forms. Coburn evaluated 23forms, identified rating scales, and grouped the content of the evaluation forms into the categories of "traits of character" and "competencies." He integrated his results into a suggested standardized evaluation form to be used by fieldwork supervisors.

The evaluation forms provided to fieldwork supervisors ranged in depth and complexity. For the mechanism of evaluation, 36 asked for both ratings of qualities and narrative descriptions. One used ratings solely, and seven used narratives only. Two forms simply asked the question "How did the student meet the objectives?" The last form provided a blank space for the supervisor to choose qualities that they elected to rate.

The components of the forms included a variety of options. Twenty asked for a recommended grade or overall score. Seventeen provided a narrative space for strengths, and 20 provided the same for weaknesses. The most commonly used ratings scale was 1 to 5, but others used 1 to 10, 1 to 4, 1 to 3, Meet/Not Meet, and letter grade scales. Twenty seven forms had an additional blank comment area at the end for supervisors to write any additional comments they see fit.

Some of the library school fieldwork evaluation forms contained additional questions about the students that did not fit into a direct evaluation category. Several required yes or no answers, but a few required narrative responses that pinpoint the student's responsibilities and best qualities. These questions are shown in table 36. Except for the first two, these questions generally appeared at the end of the forms.

Table 36. Additional evaluation form questions

Characteristic	Frequency
Ask supervisor to list student responsibilities/goals	20
Rate success in meeting stated goals/assignments	12
Would you hire student?	12
Would you give student a recommendation?	4
Was student able to contribute to the host site?	4
Was student adequately prepared via coursework?	3
Predict student's degree of success in the field	3
General impression of student	2
What do you think student learned/gained?	2
Did student work required amount of time to complete course?	1
Did you have any problems working with student?	1

Table 36 (continued)

Did you discuss career plans with student?	1
List most valuable skills you look for in an intern	1
List most valuable skills of this particular intern	1

Almost half of the forms provided a space in which the fieldwork supervisor can list the student's responsibilities and/or goals, and about half of those asked for a rating of success on whether or not the student met them. Twelve of the 47 forms had a space for the supervisor to indicate whether or not they would hire that particular fieldwork student. Only one form asked the supervisor directly if they had any problems working with the student.

Another component of some of the evaluation forms was the library schools' inquiries to the fieldwork supervisors about the value of the fieldwork experience. Eleven asked how the library school could improve the experience for the library. Nine asked if the experience was worthwhile for the library. Lastly, six asked the supervisors if they would do fieldwork supervision again.

From the 47 library school evaluation forms, the researcher identified and extracted every individual item that required the fieldwork supervisor to assign some sort of ranking, grade, or evaluation to a fieldwork student, whether that be narrative or a provided choice. This totaled 836 characteristics that were isolated and copied into an spreadsheet. Using Coburn's analysis of 23 library school evaluation forms as a guide,

"the varied terminology was brought together under conventionally accepted headings to facilitate common understanding" (1980). The researcher manually identified relationships between the isolated characteristics of the forms, grouped similar concepts, and tallied frequency of appearance. This summative approach to content analysis served the "purpose of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings" (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). The categories that emerged were:

- American Library Association's Core Competences (broken into the eight competency statements)
- Personal Characteristics
- Relations with Others
- Work Habits
- Personal Knowledge and Abilities
- Ability to Learn
- Emotional Attributes
- Commitment
- Professionalism
- Work Performance
- Strengths and Weaknesses

The themes above evolved from the routine duplication of evaluation characteristics on the forms provided by the library schools, and echo Coburn's method of combining synonymous terms (1980). As he found in 1980, it is still the case that library schools do not define all terms on evaluation forms, and there is the possibility for misinterpretation.

The following sections will define each of the above categories and present tables showing the frequency with which related characteristics appear on the library school fieldwork evaluation forms. These characteristics will be presented in frequency order. Terms pulled from the library school fieldwork evaluation forms included in tables 38 through 56 are represented by the precise wording from the forms themselves.

Core Competences

The characteristics included in the grouping category of "Core Competences" reflect the skills and aptitudes included in the ALA *Core Competences* (2009) depicted in table 37, along with references to which tables in this chapter cover these competences, and on which pages these tables appear. According to ALA's document, "a person graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies should know and, where appropriate, be able to employ" the skills and aptitudes in the document.

Table 37. ALA Core Competences (2009)

Competency	Table	Page
Foundations of the Profession	38	113
Information Resources	39	115
Organization of Recorded Knowledge	40	116
Technological Knowledge and Skills	41	117
Reference and User Services	42	119
Research	43	120
Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning	44	121
Administration and Management	45	122

These competencies are broken into eight functional areas, and tables 38 through 45

include the qualities from the 47 evaluation forms related to each.

Foundations of the Profession

The "Foundations of the Profession" competency covers the role of librarians,

intellectual freedom, ethics, principles, and history of the profession. It is the broadest of

the eight competencies, and envelops types of libraries, current trends, legal implications,

certification, the history of human communication, and advocacy. A final tenet of the

foundations competency is communication, both written and verbal.

Table 38. Frequency of "Foundations of the Profession" competencies

Characteristic	Frequency
Communication, communication skills, employs effective communication skills, communicated, communicated well, communicates well with patrons, communicates well with patrons and staff, communicates well with staff, communicate with supervisor	17
Analysis skills, analytic ability problem solving, analytical skills, analyze problems, assist in providing original solutions, and follow through with implementation plans; critical thinking skills	6
Communicate in writing, communication skills written, writing ability, written communication	6
Communicate verbally, communication skills verbal, oral/speaking ability, verbal communication	6
Apply theory, apply theory to practice; apply theory, conceptual principles and scholarly research; applying the concepts and principles of library and information sciences	4
Communicates clearly in writing and speaking, oral and written communication, written and spoken communication	4
Expressed himself/herself in written and oral English, Uses correct English, use of English-spoken, use of English-written	4
Intellectual freedom, recognizes the tenets of intellectual freedom	3
Privacy, maintain confidentiality, patron privacy	3
Information policy, information issues and regulations	2
Knows history of information professions, background knowledge of librarianship at the outset	2
Awareness of current issues/events that impact libraries	1
Awareness of professional ethics	1
Communicate appropriately to individuals, and groups through group discussions and presentations	1
Express oneself	1
Foreign language proficiency	1
Intellectual property	1
Interest in the issues, policies, and organizations related to the field	1
Knowledge of subject area	1

Table 38 (continued)

Maintains a professional demeanor in verbal interactions with staff	1
Recognizes libraries' needs for advocates	1
Self-confidence in speaking and behavior	1
Understands the changing roles of information professionals	1

The most common qualities that appeared on evaluation forms from the Foundations Competencies have to do with communication skills, and are represented through different phrases. The next most common tenets were privacy, intellectual freedom, and applying theory to practice. For this competency, none of the evaluation forms asked for assessment of the student related to the history of human communication, or made direct reference to legal implications of any quality.

Information Resources

The "Information Resources" competency covers topics related to collection development, collection management, and preservation and maintenance of collections. It is concerned with the entire cycle of information, including creation, selection, evaluation, processing, and disposal.

Table 39. Frequency of "Information Resources" competencies

Characteristic	Frequency
Selection skills, select best potential resources to meet information needs, principles of materials selection, principles of collection development, recommending resources for purchase, verify requested items for selection	8
Awareness of acquisition and disposition of resources, acquisitions, ordering materials	3
Information resources, knowledge of information sources, knowledge of sources	3
Collection management skills; analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of an existing collection	2
Knowledge of reviewing sources, evaluate resources	2
Understanding of preservation and conservation of collections, repair materials	2
Bibliography preparation	1
Collection development	1
Create, select, or acquire information resources	1
Develop resources for special populations	1
Develop, maintain, and evaluate information content	1
Identification, selection, and acquisition	1
Manage and/or preserve information resources	1
Receiving and processing materials	1
Retrieval, provision of access, storage, and preservation	1
Weeding	1

Selection skills were the most frequently appearing characteristic on evaluation forms, followed by knowledge of sources, and acquisitions skills. One form included information resources development specifically for special populations. For this

competency, there were few mentions of deselection, or weeding, and no mentions of purchasing of resources.

Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information

The "Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information" competency encompasses general standards of information organization, cataloging, metadata, classification and indexing. It also includes the actual skills needed to be able to describe and organize resources.

Table 40. Frequency of "Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information" competencies

Characteristic	Frequency
Cataloging, original cataloging, online editing, copy cataloging	6
Organize, classify, and deliver information; organize and/or describe information resources; organization of recorded knowledge and information, understands the principles of the organization and representation of information; understands information organization	6
Technical services skills, technical services and skills, work with technical matters	4
Shelve materials, reads shelves	2
Classification standards	1
Indexing	1
Management principles to the creation, administration, and promotion of information organizations and systems	1

Table 40 (continued)

Metadata	1
Perform proofreading and material correction	1
Periodical management	1
Uploading onto OPAC	1

Cataloging and organization of information were the most recurrent qualities for this competency, followed by technical services skills. Although developmental and evaluative skills did not appear on the forms, they are included in the competency document. For this competency, only one form inquired about the OPAC, indexing, or metadata.

Technological Knowledge and Skills

The "Technological Knowledge and Skills" competency is concerned with using technologies, applying them to different services, and being aware of emerging technology. It comprises different types of technology, including that related to communication, information, and assistive ones.

Table 41. Frequency of "Technological Knowledge and Skills" competencies

Characteristic	Frequency
Information technology skills, demonstrated and acquired knowledge and skill in using information technologies, technological knowledge and skills, technology skills, possessed or learned technological skills needed	6
Evaluate and assess technologies	2

Table 41 (continued)

Media literacy/media utilization technologies	2
Understanding of technologies, understands, implements and/or uses appropriate technologies	2
Use of technologies in an ethical manner, proper use and care of department equipment	2
Comfortable with appropriate technology	1
Use assistive technologies	1
Use communication technologies	1
Use current information technologies	1

The most commonly appearing quality in this competency was the possession of basic technological skills. A few forms did separate out types of technology, and two made allusion to the use of technology in an ethical manner. For this competency, none of the evaluation forms asked for assessment of the student related to the appraisal of various aspects of technologies, including technological specifications or cost-efficiency.

Reference and User Services

The "Reference and User Services" competency is broad, and covers general reference, literacy, advocacy, responding to diversity of patron needs, and development of services. It incorporates emerging circumstances that may have an effect on user services.

Table 42. Frequency of "Reference and User Services" competencies

Characteristic	Frequency
Reference and research skills, use primary reference tools, use secondary reference tools, provide bibliographic assistance	6
Programming, programming other than story hour, story hours, conduct library programs	4
Online searching, bibliographic searching	3
Provides consultation, mediation, and guidance to all users, serve diverse clientele, provides access to relevant information to diverse users	3
Determine information needs for self and for customers, ability to determine information needs for self and patrons	2
User services/reference, user guidance	2
Manage user-centered information services and systems to meet the needs of changing and diverse communities of users by analyzing the information needs of the individuals and communities in the context of the demographic, social, economic, and ethical factors	1
Readers advisory	1
Reference interviews/question negotiation	1
Retrieve and disseminate information	1
Telephone reference	1
Understands role in assisting patrons	1
Use print information	1

General reference skills were the primary appearing characteristics in this competency, followed by programming services. Diversity appeared more than once. No forms included evaluation of numerical or statistical literacy, which appear in the *ALA Core Competences*. For this competency, none of the evaluation forms asked for assessment of the student related to emerging conditions that may affect user services.

116

Research

The "Research" competency is the shortest one. It mentions quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the research of the field, and the mechanisms to understand and utilize research findings.

Table 43. Frequency of "Research" competencies

Characteristic	Frequency
Research techniques	1

For this competency, there was only one form that made any reference at all to research, and it was simply listed as research techniques.

Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning

The "Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning" competency speaks of the role of the library, the need for professional involvement, and the application of lifelong learning. It also involves the application of learning theories and instruction in libraries.

Table 44. Frequency of "Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning" competencies

Characteristic	Frequency
Professional development, knowledge of professional development	2
Continuing education	1
Learn about, select, and join appropriate organizations for specialties	1
Participation in professional activities	1
Preparedness for profession	1

Few forms incorporated the tenets of this competency. The mentions were mostly about post-graduation professional development in respect to organizations, activities, and continuing education, and one was about preparedness for the profession.

Administration and Management

The last competency covers "Administration and Management." It incorporates leadership, collaboration, assessment, human resources, planning, and budgeting. This competency represents administration at a broad level, covering all stakeholders and communities served.

Table 45. Frequency of "Administration and Management" competencies

Characteristic	Frequency
Leadership, leadership skills, leadership principles	5
Administration/management, administrative ability, management	4
Supervision, supervisory skills	2
Assess information needs of diverse and underserved	1
Assess information services	1
Awareness of the principles of assessment and evaluation of library services/programs and outcomes	1
Discussed criteria used to evaluate services and programs	1
Negotiation skills	1
Planned with others	1

For this competency, none of the evaluation forms asked for assessment of the student

related to budgeting, nor were there qualities on the forms about networking. Leadership

did figure prominently, with five forms mentioning it.

The next sections of this chapter will cover the categories of characteristics that

did not fall into the ALA *Core Competences*, listed in table 46 along with references to

which tables in this chapter cover these competences, and on which pages these tables

appear.

Table 46. Non-competence categories

Competency	Table	Page
Personal characteristics	47	124
Relations with others	48	125
Work habits	49	127
Personal knowledge and abilities	50	128
Ability to learn	51	130
Emotional attributes	52	131
Commitment	53	133
Professionalism	54	134
Work performance	55	136
Strengths and weaknesses	56	137

Personal Characteristics

In the grouping category of "Personal Characteristics," there are many qualities

that are represented both as adjectives and nouns which describe personal attributes that a

fieldwork student may or may not possess. These are reminiscent of what an employer might look for in a job candidate.

Table 47. Frequency of personal characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Initiative, willingness to take initiative	26
Dependable, dependability	18
Creative, creativity, imagination	17
Judgment, soundness of judgment	17
Decision-making, makes appropriate work decisions, makes decisions	9
Reliability, could be relied upon, reliability in following instructions	9
Flexible, flexibility, flexibility in handling new situations	7
Resourceful, resourcefulness	7
Responsible, responsibilities	7
Innovation, innovativeness, ingenuity	3
Curiosity	2
Self-director, self-starter	2
Act decisively	1
Originality	1
Think objectively	1
Understands and applies logical principles to the 'doing' of the project	1

Initiative, dependability, creativity, and judgment floated solidly to the top of this list of characteristics. Many forms asked supervisors to rate these qualities. However, not so many inquired as to the flexibility, resourcefulness, or responsibility of the fieldwork

student. One form inquired as to whether the student "understands and applies logical principles to the 'doing' of the project."

Relations with Others

The grouping category of "Relations with Others" is operationally defined as containing the many qualities concerned with how the fieldwork student got along with others, and how they worked with others.

Table 48. Frequency of relations with others characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Work with others, work well with supervisor, staff, and patrons; work with administrators, staff, public; work with patrons, work with staff, worked with staff and patrons; worked with staff, other personnel, and patrons/clients; working with the public; working with the staff, works well with coworkers	15
Cooperation, cooperate with members of his or her own and other units, cooperation with others, work cooperatively with others, cooperativeness, works cooperatively with other staff members	14
Interpersonal skills, Interaction with others, interacts successfully with all ages and groups, interpersonal relations, interpersonal relations with clientele, supervisors, colleagues, and staff, interpersonal relations with constituencies, relations with library public or staff, relations with others, interaction with others	11
Teamwork, adaptability to team environment, sense of teamwork, work as a team member, worked as team	8
Get along with others in a team environment, got along with other staff, interaction with office personnel, interaction with other staff, interaction with supervisor, interpersonal relations with peers	6

Table 48 (continued)

Collaboration, builds collaborative relationships, collaborate with future members of other information professions, collaboration with other students through group projects	4
Assisted and interacted with library users, deal with clientele	2
Customer service, human relations skills	2
Presented a professional manner with patrons, presented a professional manner with the other librarians	2
Compatibility to the work environment	1
Consideration of others	1
Effectiveness in dealing with others	1

Working with others, cooperation, and interpersonal skills were the most frequently appearing characteristics on evaluation forms from this set of characteristics. They were represented in many forms, such as "cooperation," "cooperation with others," "work cooperatively with others." Teamwork and the ability to get along with others also appeared repeatedly. Only one form asked as to the compatibility of the fieldwork student to the work environment, and only one asked about how considerate of others the student was.

Work Habits

In the grouping category of "Work Habits," the qualities are concerned with characteristics that directly relate to how the fieldwork student performs work assignments. Many speak of how the student handles direction, how they complete tasks, and how organized they are.

Table 49. Frequency of work habit characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Organization, organization of work, organizational ability, organizational skills, organize, organized, organizing	16
Complete tasks, completes assigned tasks, completion of project goal(s), completion of projects, satisfactorily complete tasks, completed assigned tasks in a timely manner, completes project within allotted time frame, completes work in a timely manner, completed assignments promptly, and of high quality; assigned work performed satisfactorily	12
Independence, independence of action, independent project/research, independently act on needs, work independently, worked independently with no more than necessary instruction and supervision, performs independent projects without close supervision; has the ability to carry out job tasks with or without job supervision	11
Follow instructions, follow directions and ask questions, willingness to take direction; willing to ask for guidance and to follow it, willingness to ask for and use guidance	9
Helpfulness; willingness to serve	3
Prioritize, set priorities and make decisions, setting priorities	3
Time management, use of time	3
Work habits	3
Organizes, plans, and completes work efficiently; planning and organizing	2
Persistence, persistence to complete tasks	2
Plan, ability to plan	2
Take action without being asked to do so, anticipate needs	2
Accommodate change	1
Assumed responsibilities	1
Effective	1
Efficient	1
Follow-through	1
Managed multiple work assignments	1
Meeting deadlines	1
Speed	1

Although only one form asked fieldwork supervisors to evaluate the speed with which students completed tasks, many asked about whether or not the tasks were completed, how independently the student performed the task, and how organized they were in doing so. Some did ask about how well the fieldwork student followed directions, and others asked about the student's ability to plan and prioritize.

Personal Knowledge and Abilities

The grouping category of "Personal Knowledge and Abilities" is operationally defined as the qualities that deal with the student's own comprehension of library skills and topics, and how they use that knowledge to perform in fieldwork assignments.

Table 50. Frequency of personal knowledge and abilities characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Knowledge, academic knowledge, knowledge of tasks, professional knowledge, technical and professional knowledge	10
Problem solving skills, problem solving, create and communicate possible solutions to problems, suggest viable solutions for problems	7
Presentation skills, makes presentations to share knowledge, group presentation and individualized instruction	5
Assess skills, assess skills and knowledge	3
Grasp essentials, grasp of subject	3
Job knowledge over time, increasing knowledge and skills	3
Potential as a professional librarian, probability for success in the profession, professional ability	3

Table 50 (continued)

Preparation, preparedness for duties, job preparedness	3
Synthesize information, synthesize information and communicate it, synthesizes information from diverse sources	3
Apply classroom experience to real time projects, apply knowledge of the field to assigned tasks	2
Possessed fundamental understanding of librarianship, student adequately prepared vis-à-vis coursework to complete this field experience	2
Reach sound conclusions	2
Acquisition/learning of professional skills	1
Bring unique talent to projects	1
Identifies, corrects and/or reports problem areas, identify problems and communicate findings	1
Knowledgeable and inquisitive concerning the relationship between theory and practice	1
Teaching skills	1
Technical skill	1

Job knowledge was the quality that appears most on evaluation forms from this thematic grouping. Problem-solving skills appeared the next most frequently, followed by presentation skills. Only one form included teaching skills, and only one asked fieldwork supervisors to assess the 'unique talent' of a student.

Ability to Learn

In the grouping category of "Ability to Learn," the attributes deal with the potential of the fieldwork student, his or her willingness to learn, and the flexibility the student displays in handling new things.

125

Table 51. Frequency of ability to learn characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Adaptability, adapt to a variety of tasks, adaptability to change, adaptable, adapted well to changes, adjustability	13
Learn from constructive criticism, learn from criticism, reacts well to suggestions, respond positively to criticism; attitude toward instruction/criticism, learn to take criticism; open to feedback and evaluation; learn from mistakes; accept constructive criticism, accept criticism, response to criticism	13
Desire to gain more expertise and knowledge of job, eagerness to learn, readiness to learn, professional responsibility to learn; willingness to acquire new skills, willingness to learn, willingness to learn new things; interest in the practicum as a learning experience	10
Ability to learn, ability to learn and apply new skills and procedures, aptitude for learning	5
Asks for clarification when unsure of proper procedures, seeks direction, seeks instruction; asks for direction	4
Ability to accept instructions, receptive to feedback and directions from supervisors, respond positively to direction	3
Application to work, apply oneself	2
Asks appropriate questions; asked questions, and reflected upon the answers	2
Willingness to assume responsibility	2
Exploited learning opportunities	1
Improvement in the student's skills over the course of the practicum	1
Interest in the work	1
Professional growth	1
Receptive to new ideas	1
Responsiveness to supervision	1
Seeks evaluation of performance	1

The ability to accept and react to criticism appeared frequently on the forms in one manner or another. Adaptability also emerged as a common basis for evaluation. The fieldwork student's willingness and eagerness to learn appears as the next most common attribute for evaluation. Appearing only once in the forms was whether or not the student sought evaluation of his or her performance, and whether or not he or she "exploited learning opportunities."

Emotional Attributes

In the category of "Emotional Attributes," the researcher includes characteristics that are more expressive in regards to personal sentiments and deportment. Manners and demeanor encompass these qualities.

Table 52. Frequency of emotional attributes

Characteristic	Frequency
Attitude	9
Enthusiasm, enthusiasm for assignments, enthusiasm for the experience	8
Tact	5
Courtesy, courtesy to staff and volunteers	4
Alertness	3
Conduct, conduct at work, personal demeanor	3
Emotional stability, emotional stamina, possession of emotional control	3
Maturity	3
Poise	3

Table 52 (continued)

Assertiveness	2
Conscientious, conscientiousness	2
Cope in stressful learning situations, cope in stressful situations	2
Positive attitude, positive attitude towards assigned tasks	2
Self-control	2
Avoid bias and emotional response	1
Patience	1
Sensitivity	1
Stability	1
Tolerance	1
Vitality	1

This grouping category had the most unique non-competency attributes from the forms, with nothing appearing on more than nine forms. Poise, patience, sensitivity, and vitality appeared only once in the entire corpus of evaluation forms. Enthusiasm, attitude, and tact, however, were more common emotional attributes for evaluation.

Commitment

The grouping category of "Commitment" is operationally defined as containing the qualities incorporating how the fieldwork student fits in to the organization, how they adhere to the basic schedules, culture, and restrictions of the workplace.

Table 53. Frequency of commitment characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Promptness, punctual, punctuality, arrived promptly and did not leave early; arrives for work ready to begin his or her shift	14
Attendance; arrives for work at scheduled time or has given prior notification of absence or lateness	11
Became informed about existing policies, informed about the institution's/department's policies, knowledge of policies and procedures, policy and procedures	4
Honors schedules, appointments, and deadlines; kept to schedule; commitment to scheduled work days and hours; followed the schedule without unexcused absences	4
Commitment, commitment to job	3
Adapted to the culture of the library's environment; show an understanding for your organizational culture, clients, and mission	2
Made a noticeable contribution to the department, project value to the organization	2
Participates in the organization/department meetings/activities, participation in library operations	2
Adheres to work area restrictions	1
Became familiar with reports, including how including how information is gathered, processed, routed and the use to which reports are put	1
Conformity to codes	1
Dedication	1
Discipline	1
Gained an appreciation, and understanding of your library/information center and its services	1
Maintenance of an atmosphere conducive to achieving the goals and objectives of the organization	1
Participated in agency activities in the community, as appropriate	1
Uphold the agreements made pertaining to working hours and assignments	1

Attendance and punctuality were the front running qualities from this category. Other characteristics here are vaguely similar, but hard to group. For example, one school grouped adherence to agreements about schedule and assignments in one rating. Another asked for a simple rating of the fieldwork student's discipline.

Professionalism

In the grouping category of "Professionalism," the fieldwork student's standards and ethics are rated. From dress code to personal vision of librarianship, it is through these attributes the student demonstrates his or her professional attitude and behavior.

Table 54. Frequency of professionalism characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Professional behavior; professional demeanor; professionalism; work professionally; acted in a professional manner, conduct herself/himself in a professional manner; demonstrate professional growth	15
Ethical attitude, ethical standards, ethical standards and practices; high ethical and professional standards; maintains ethical behavior	8
Integrity, professional integrity, commitment to professional principles	7
Appearance, dress code, grooming, personal appearance	4
Professional attitude	4
Service ethic; service orientation	3
Trustworthiness	2

Table 54 (continued)

Completes assignments in a professional manner	1
Equity	1
Interested in professional issues and policies	1
Vision	1
Worked within a reasonable set of expectations for conduct as defined by the profession and workplace	1

Vision and equity each appeared once on an evaluation form. Professional behavior

dominated this category with 15 appearances in different variations on the forms. The

fieldwork student's ethical standards also appeared often. Trustworthiness materialized in

this category twice, and four schools asked the supervisors to rate the students' grooming.

Work Performance

The quality, quantity, and method through which the fieldwork student

accomplishes work appear in the grouping category of "Work Performance." It is in this

category that the fieldwork supervisor rates his or her student on performance and

whether or not tasks are completed.

Table 55. Frequency of work performance characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Quality, quality of assignments, quality of assignments completed, quality of work, quality of effort	18
Accuracy, accurate, accurately, attention to accuracy and detail, attention to detail, completes assigned tasks accurately	8
Quantity of work	7
Thorough, thoroughness	6
Met objectives, met practicum standards, achieved objectives, fulfilled expectations for working productively	4
Performance, work performance	4
Productivity	3
Admits errors, avoidance of errors and ability to learn from them	2
Industriousness, industry/thoroughness	2
Creates project successfully	1
Demonstrated growth	1
Performance met minimum standards for academic credit	1
Physical stamina	1
Project completed and delivered in timely fashion	1
Seemed to gain much	1

Many schools asked fieldwork supervisors about their students' work quality; fewer asked about the quantity of work the student performed. Accuracy and thoroughness appeared as the next most often. One school asked about the students' physical stamina.

132

Strengths and Weaknesses

The simplest grouping category is "Strengths and Weaknesses." These qualities generally appear at the end of the evaluation forms, and usually incorporate a space for narrative explanation.

Table 56. Frequency of strengths and weaknesses

Characteristic	Frequency
Strengths	17
Recognizes personal strengths	1
Areas of excellence	1
Areas for improvement	20
Recognizes need for improvement	1
Recognizes areas for improvement	1
Weaknesses	2

More schools asked about a fieldwork student's weaknesses, or areas of improvement, than asked about the strengths, or areas of excellence. In few cases was this phrased from the student's point of view, as in whether or not the student acknowledges his or her own strengths and weaknesses.

Through content analysis of 47 library school-issued fieldwork evaluation forms, the researcher was able to categorize and quantify the attributes and abilities of students that fieldwork supervisors are asked to evaluate. These characteristics fell into various thematic categories, and the most frequently occurring appear in table 57.

Table 57. Most frequently appearing evaluation characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency
Initiative	26
Areas for improvement/weaknesses	24
Strengths	19
Dependability	18
Quality of assignments	18
Communication skills	17
Creativity	17
Judgment	17
Organization skills	16
Works with others	15
Professionalism	15

The most frequently appearing characteristic for evaluation on the forms provided by library schools to fieldwork supervisors is "initiative." Secondly, schools asked for "areas for improvement" the next most often. How these results compare to the results of the online survey and the interview responses will be discussed in the next chapter.

Conclusion

Through an online survey, the researcher discovered that fieldwork supervisors look for students with an interest in a certain area of librarianship, utilize discussion with students as the most frequent method of assessing capabilities and setting goals, and generally complete the evaluation forms provided by the library schools. Half of the respondents indicated that their own personal fieldwork experience affects how they

supervise current students, and most try to pass on knowledge they have gained through their experiences to their students.

Information provided through interviews showed that fieldwork supervisors consider themselves mentors and supervisors, although some mention other roles such as coach or resource. Again, discussion with fieldwork students emerged as the most frequent method through which to gauge students' capabilities. The activities conducted during the fieldwork experience mimic the progression of a learner through Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, with supervisors creating collaborative "teachable moments," having students observe and practice, and then finally letting them manage projects on their own (Vygotsky 1987).

Evaluation forms provided by library schools for fieldwork supervisors to use in assessing students had specific qualities that appear more often than others. More of the characteristics on the evaluation forms have to do with personal qualities and knowledge, work habits and performance, and strengths and weaknesses, while less of the characteristics have to do with core competencies of library work.

Table 58 below provides a highlight of the results from all three methods as related to the sections of the online survey.

Table 58. Consensus of results

Survey Section	Survey Results	Interview Results	Form Analysis Results
Initial Assessment	Fieldwork supervisors most desire interest in certain area of librarianship and personality as characteristics they look for in fieldwork students. The most common method of discovering what the student already knows is through discussion with the student. In determining methods of goal setting, discussion with student ranked highest.	The majority of respondents utilize an interview or conversation with fieldwork students to determine capabilities. Personal perception appeared as an alternate method to decide a student's competence.	Only one evaluation form asks for fieldwork supervisor to list the most valuable skills desired in students. Three forms asked if the student was adequately prepared for the fieldwork experience via coursework.
Student Progress	Discussion with student ranked highest as a method for designing assignments. No clear method of determining success of assignments rose to the top. Student personal characteristics, mentoring opportunities, and communication skills ranked highest in other topics discussed during fieldwork.	Shadowing and observation emerged as frequent methods for students to interact at beginning of fieldwork experience. Specific assignments related to day-to-day operations, including reference, providing programming, and collection management.	The most frequently appearing characteristics for evaluation on library school forms were initiative, areas for improvement, and strengths. One form asked whether or not career plans were discussed with the fieldwork student. No forms ask about legal implications, assessment of technologies, or statistical literacy.

Table 58 (continued)

Student Assessment	The most common method of formal evaluation is completion of a form provided by a library school. The most common method of informal evaluation is through discussion with library staff.	Half of respondents state they use evaluation forms provided by library schools.	Forty seven library schools use a formal evaluation for students in a fieldwork course. Twelve forms ask fieldwork supervisor to rate student success in meeting stated goals.
Final Thoughts	The majority of fieldwork supervisors feel they have important skills to teach others, but less feel they have made a difference or will be remembered by their students. Fieldwork experiences are deemed successful if the students meet goals and objectives.	Fieldwork supervisors see themselves as mentors and supervisors, rather than trainers or teachers. Respondents indicate they would like more information or input from the library schools.	Eleven forms ask how the library school can improve the experience. Nine forms ask if it's worthwhile for the library. Six forms ask fieldwork supervisors if they would do fieldwork supervision again.

Chapter five will include discussion of these results, their relation to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory, and their application in regards to the original research questions.

137

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this dissertation research was to answer four research questions regarding supervisors of fieldwork students in public libraries. The research questions were concerned with the initial assessment of fieldwork students, activities occurring during fieldwork experiences, assessment of students, and feelings of the fieldwork supervisors about their roles. This chapter will deliberate findings associated to the research questions, relate Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, review the methodology used, and discuss avenues for future research regarding fieldwork supervision.

Summary of Findings

There were four research questions framing this research about fieldwork supervisors (FWS). They echo the progression of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory (ZPD). The specific questions were:

R1: To what extent does the FWS perform an initial assessment of the student?

R2: In what ways does the FWS move the student through the ZPD?

R3: How does the FWS assess the student's progression through the zone?

138

R4: How does the FWS feel about his or her role in the fieldwork experience?

Initial assessment is performed by fieldwork supervisors at the beginning of the fieldwork experience. This is done through discussion with students about their knowledge, identifying their interests in particular areas of librarianship, and gauging their personalities. Most supervisors also set goals for students and design assignments for the fieldwork experience through discussion with students. Though there was no clear overall method of determining success of assignments, the general progression through the ZPD involved assignment design, observation activities, hands-on training, and then independent projects. Formal assessment is most often done by fieldwork supervisors by using the library school-provided evaluation forms, and informal assessment is frequently done through discussion with library staff about the fieldwork student. Supervisors report positive feelings about fieldwork experiences, view themselves as mentors, and indicate that they feel they have important skills to teach others. According to respondents, the entire fieldwork experience is deemed successful if the students meet goals and objectives.

Discussion of Findings

This section will reflect on each question individually, synthesizing results from the online survey, interviews, and analysis of evaluation forms as warranted.

Research Question 1: To what extent does the FWS perform an initial assessment of the student?

Analysis of survey and interview results show overwhelmingly that fieldwork supervisors gain the most information for initial assessment through conversation with students. It is "most useful to talk with the student about their interests, goals, knowledge, (and) expectations" because "the student knows best what they know." Discussion with the student is also the most frequently used method to determine what they already understand about library theory and procedure.

Additional methods given for initial assessment were observation of the student, discussion with other staff, and via review of the student's application for the fieldwork experience. One respondent suggests a more extensive approach to initially assess a student through the provision by the student of a portfolio or project proposal with supporting materials from which the fieldwork supervisor could learn more about the practical capabilities of the student. They wish for more tangible documentation rather than information gleaned from an interview.

When asked how the fieldwork supervisor knows if initial assessments were successful, survey respondents cite observation of the student during the beginning period of the experience, gauging the student's reactions, and performance on preliminary tasks. One fieldwork supervisor summarizes that they know the initial assessment is successful if:

… the student is able to do the tasks given to him/her. If not, a reassessment of the

student's knowledge must be done.

More experienced fieldwork supervisors indicate that they have gained a second sense about assessment of students at the beginning of the experience. They state that they "have a sense" about the students, and that their own personal experiences as fieldwork students allow them to "spot the ones who are jumping through hoops." One goes so far as to say:

I have seldom been wrong when assessing communication style, (the) best place

for someone to work within a public library, or the degree of sincerity (a student

has) about being in a helping profession that changes every day.

No responses given in the survey or the interviews indicated how long the fieldwork supervisor's initial discussions with the students took, or to what level of depth the conversations went. Results simply indicated that discussion or conversations were the most used methods.

Research Question 2: In what ways does the FWS move the student through the ZPD?

As described in Chapter 1, the ZPD is reflected in the fieldwork experience, with the fieldwork supervisor being the more capable peer (MCP) who has knowledge to share with fieldwork students, and thus guides them from the their current level of development to a higher level of knowledge through crafted progressive assignments.

The activities assigned and the guidance given were indicated by the fieldwork supervisors in one section of the online survey and through one question of the follow-up interview. The majority of respondents set goals or student learning objectives for their students. They accomplish this through discussion with students, library staff, and faculty or staff at the library school. Using these goals and objectives as a guide, the fieldwork supervisor is able to create assignments and interactions for the students in order to bridge the ZPD.

Though the interactions designed by the fieldwork supervisor could potentially arise from directions by a library school and the tenets of its curriculum, the specific tasks generally originate from the needs of the library in concert with options discussed with the fieldwork student. The students participate in a multitude of ways. They may shadow library staff, interact with staff, perform hands-on tasks, or complete independent projects. Fieldwork supervisors commonly work closely with the student at first, and then gradually retreat as the student works more autonomously.

When asked how fieldwork supervisors guide students through the fieldwork experience, respondents offered a variety of options. Both solo and team projects are given, but many respondents say that assignments begin with informational periods (such as review of library policy and procedure), then observation and shadowing. Deadlines are enforced, and feedback is constant. Interaction with staff is immediate; interaction with the patrons is more gradual. Specific activities include reference service, collection

development, indexing, metadata creation, children's programming, participation in training webinars and staff meetings, and marketing. This progression of roles and activities through fieldwork experience as related to the ZPD is reflected in table 59 below.

Table 59. Progression of roles and activities in the Zone of Proximal Development

Student Role/Activity	Fieldwork Activities	Supervisor Role/Activity
Practitioner	Independent Projects	Formal assessment
Accept responsibility	Teamwork	Provide informal feedback
Information gatherer	Observation	Instructor
Learner	Designing Assignments	More capable peer
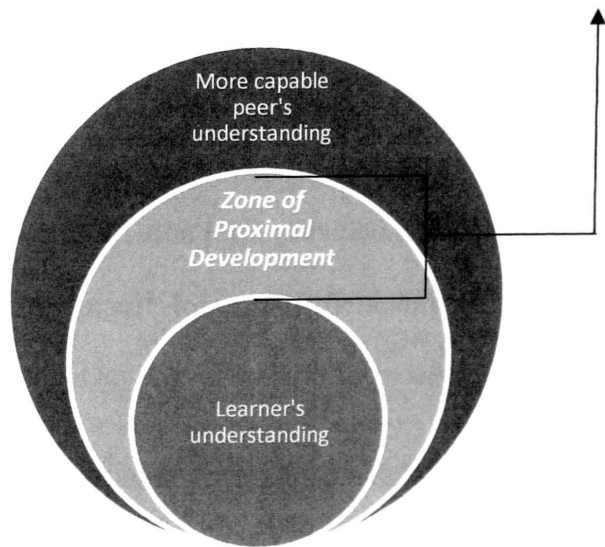
Although one respondent says simply that they "do not know," fieldwork supervisors believe that assignments have been successful when the student performs well, elicits positive feedback from library staff and patrons, and delivers quality work. One respondent believes the assignments are worthwhile when "the student demonstrates

143

understanding of the material" and asks "intuitive/innovative questions demonstrating understanding." Fieldwork supervisors are concerned with how students relate assignments to the "bigger picture" or can work independently. One defines success of the student's progression through the ZPD as when they "leave with greater knowledge than they started."

Research Question 3: How does the FWS assess the student's progression through the zone?

Assessments occur both formally and informally, and generally at the end of the fieldwork experience. Most respondents indicated that they do not perform a formal midpoint assessment. The most frequently occurring response regarding the formal method of assessment of fieldwork students at the end of the experience was completion of the evaluation form provided by library schools, followed by the production of a written report. Informally, fieldwork supervisors most often solicit input from library staff and have casual discussions with the students.

In comparing what the fieldwork supervisors indicated they actually assess to what library schools ask them to assess, there were similarities and differences. Some respondents to the online survey and interviews specify that they use only the library school's evaluation form to assess the students. However, the researcher also finds that fieldwork supervisors indicate they wish to evaluate their students' ability to do specific library assignments, such as collection development, tasks related to integrated library

144

systems, and budgeting, whilst the analyzed library school evaluation forms ask for more general overall personal characteristics, such as initiative, strengths and weaknesses, and dependability.

Fieldwork supervisors were asked to indicate how much time during the fieldwork experience the ALA *Core Competences of Librarianship* were incorporated into the student's assignments. The following table compares the average percentage of time containing each competency to the frequency of appearance on the library school evaluation forms.

Table 60. ALA Core Competences compared to library school forms

Competency	% time spent	Frequency of appearance on library school forms
Research	7.44	1
Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning	6.73	6
Administration and Management	6.4	17
Technological Knowledge and Skills	19.52	18
Organization of Recorded Knowledge	11.57	25
Reference and User Services	22.22	27
Information Resources	16.54	30
Foundations of the Profession	9.57	68

It seems that while library schools ask the most for ratings on qualities incorporated in the "Foundations of the Profession" competency, which includes ethics, advocacy, and trends of the profession, fieldwork supervisors indicate less time is spent on that

145

competency than on some others. The "Research" competency is not the least utilized by fieldwork supervisors in assignments, but it rates the fewest appearances on library school evaluation forms, with only one form having it. Supervisors indicate that most assignment time is spent on "Reference and User Services," which appears third-most on the library school forms, and say they spend the least amount of time on "Administration and Management," which appears seventeen times on the forms.

Few respondents say they utilize the fieldwork students in formal assessment with the exception of discussion of progress. There was only one mention of having the students themselves "grade" their own fieldwork experience, nor do the library school evaluation forms given to the supervisors and evaluated for this research have sections asking for such input. Twenty of the library school forms do ask the supervisor to recommend a grade or overall score.

Vygotsky does not provide detail on how or how often assessment should occur. Rather, the ZPD prescribes a framework in which a more capable peer collaborates with a student in order to move to a higher level of development and the ability to do independent work (1987; 2004). It is a theory that states that a student will move to a higher level of development given proper guidance. In the fieldwork setting, however, assessment is necessary for a few reasons. One is that library schools generally ask for feedback on students, and respondents to the survey indicate that they complete final

evaluations because they are provided by the schools. Another reason is for the fieldwork supervisor to assess themselves as well (Allal and Ducrey 2000).

Research Question 4: How does the FWS feel about his or her role in the fieldwork experience?

As evidenced by results, the overarching feeling of fieldwork supervisors of their role in the experience is that they are mentors first and supervisors second. Most feel that they have important skills to teach others, they pass along the knowledge they have gained through their own experiences, they believe they have made a difference to students, and they trust that they will be remembered by the students. Fieldwork supervisors gauge success of fieldwork experiences through their own personal satisfaction and through feedback from students. It's important to note that while the respondents see themselves in a mentoring role, evaluation or assessment is not generally part of a traditional one-on-one mentoring process, unless the partners are involved in a formal, structured mentoring program (Murray 2001).

Respondents say that they aim to introduce fieldwork students to the profession in a more hands-on role than what is provided in library school curriculum. They want to show students the variety of opportunities and jobs available, and help the students to decide whether a career in public libraries is what the student really wants. This echoes previous research by Lee (2003), Ricker (2005), and Samek and Oberg (1999). Supervisors say that the fieldwork experience is not the place to teach the history of the

profession, but rather the place to exemplify skills and services. Coincidentally, history of the profession appears on two library school fieldwork evaluation forms.

Fieldwork supervisors also want to make sure that their students are prepared to be professionals by emphasizing professional involvement and helping them to build a network of contacts to aid them in jump-starting careers. The supervisors emphasize becoming active professionally and keeping aware of current events in the field.

Largely, the thoughts on fieldwork experience expressed through responses to open-ended questions in the online survey and interviews were positive. Among them were:

I get personal satisfaction from mentoring others.

The training of future librarians is important for the libraries.

I enjoy working with interns ... I love their excitement going into the librarian profession.

It is a lot of work, but if done correctly, both the student and the institution will benefit.

It has been a mutually enjoyable experience. I enjoy sharing my knowledge and experience.

Overall...I love hosting interns and can't imagine a time in my career when I would not welcome students in to work with me.

I wish we had more library school students doing fieldwork...They come to us far too infrequently.

On the other hand, there were a handful of negative comments, such as:

Supervising fieldwork students is a gamble.

I am surprised by the lack of skills ... and their ability to convey their skills and knowledge.

In summary, fieldwork supervisors see themselves as a guide, helping the students to find their way, and serve as a resource in the learning experience, rather than as a surrogate professor for students.

Considerations of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory

According to Vygotsky, the Zone of Proximal Development is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (1978, 86). This supplied the theoretical background for this research, and is conceptualized in figure 3.
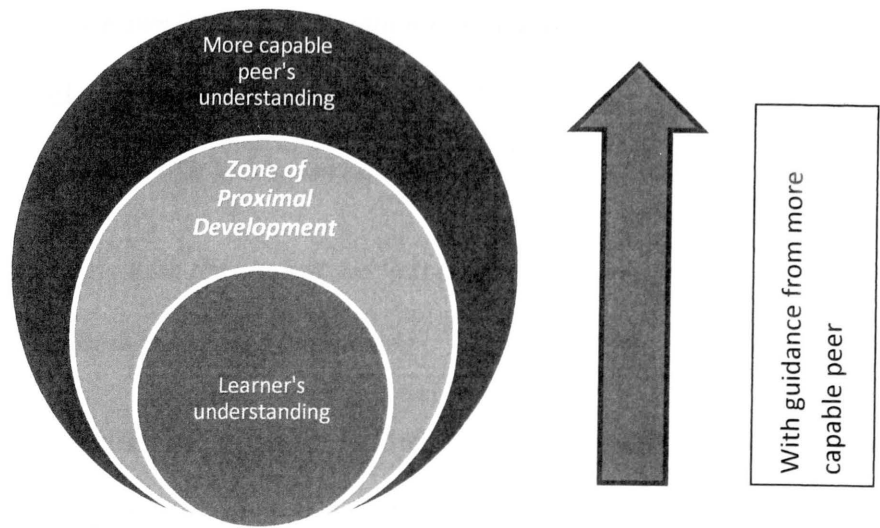
Figure 3. Visual representation of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory.

The progression of a student through the ZPD is done through a variety of activities, discussed in Chapter 4 and in the previous R3 discussion. Generally the fieldwork supervisor works collaboratively with his or her student in the beginning, and then gradually releases the student to solve problems and develop knowledge on his or her own. As various respondents indicated:

While supervising a fieldwork student I would share the benefit of my education and experience, and I really wanted to allow students the opportunity to work pretty independently in figuring out how to approach the project, make decisions with minimal guidance, but feel comfortable asking for advice and support as they felt necessary.

We work our way down from an orientation to shadowing to interactive

observation to hands-on assignments. By the end, the student is completing many

hands-on assignments that he/she is responsible for.

I try to work closely with the student the first couple of days, and ease off

gradually as we both feel more comfortable.

Assignments and tasks performed during the fieldwork experience reflect the movement

of a learner through the ZPD, with supervisors creating activities through which students

shadow and glean skills, and thus allowing them to solve problems on their own.

However, as Vygotsky pointed out, in the beginning of the fieldwork experience,

assignments must be tailored so that the student needs help, or else you are not truly

working within the student's ZPD (Vygotsky [1934] 1986).

Allal and Ducrey said that assessment can be integrated into the ZPD process

through "inclusion of variable tasks and individualized, non-scripted teacher

interventions, and qualitative observations" (2000). Assessment of the student's

progression through the ZPD is also a component of the fieldwork process. Supervisors

perform initial evaluations of students, determine what coursework has been taken, learn

what areas of interest the students have, and spend time with them in order to learn the

students' capabilities. At the end of a fieldwork experience, the supervisor is generally

responsible for completing a formal evaluation for the student's library school. One

respondent says, however, that "nothing in the school forms ever include the kind of

151

detail that a student would want in dealing with specific real life issues and planning."

Therefore the fieldwork supervisor must assess the student's progression through the ZPD more informally and constantly, and as shown in survey and interview responses, some perform these informal assessments by performing mid-point evaluations, getting input from library staff, comparing them against workplace standards, and using personal observations of the student. Perhaps library school evaluations forms could be revised or standardized to mimic this progression through the ZPD.

Taken as a whole, the fieldwork experience can be explained by Vygotsky's ZPD effectively. The student possesses a basic knowledge of library values and principles, and is now reliant on a more capable peer in the form of the fieldwork supervisor to help expand his or her knowledge base and potential development via guided progressive tasks that require modeling and imitation. Evaluation takes place, and at the end of the fieldwork experience, it is expected that the student has gained some of the MCP's understanding of practical library tasks and is ready to move on to new things.

Proposed Evaluation Form

As stated above, it might be helpful to reexamine the evaluation forms provided to fieldwork supervisors for evaluation of students. In 1980, after conducting an analysis of fieldwork evaluation forms from 23 schools, Coburn created a sample evaluation form that could be used by a supervisor in a fieldwork experience to assess a student. He took

the commonly appearing rating scales and evaluation characteristics on library school evaluation forms and accumulated them into one.

This research has undertaken a similar approach by identifying the most frequently appearing characteristics from 47 library school fieldwork evaluation forms, comparing that to what fieldwork supervisors indicate they use as a basis for evaluation of fieldwork students, and suggesting additional characteristics to comprise a new evaluation form. Most library school-provided evaluation forms do not incorporate the ALA *Core Competences of Librarianship* and other practical skills that fieldwork supervisors state they wish they could evaluate. To do this, the researcher proposes a four part form that would cover assignments, core competencies, personal characteristics, and final thoughts. A full example of said form can be found in Appendix H.

Evaluation Form Section One: Assignments

The introductory section of the proposed evaluation form would contain general information about the fieldwork experience.

Table 61. Introductory information on proposed evaluation form

Name of student
Name of supervisor & hosting institution
Contact information (email and phone)
Semester
Due date
Where to return form

There should also be a brief statement thanking the supervisor for his or her input:

> *Thank you for supporting the Library School Fieldwork Program. The fieldwork experience you provide is a valuable part of our students' educational experience. We value the information you can supply about the fieldwork student's activities and contributions during the fieldwork experience. Please use the following form to appraise the student's involvement and performance.*

There could be a place for the supervisor to sign if they give permission for the evaluation information to be shared with the student:

> *Although final grades are assigned by Library School, your evaluation provides constructive information that we use in conjunction with final reports to fully assess the student. This evaluation is confidential, and will not be shared with the student without your permission. If you agree to share this with the student, please sign here:*

> _____.

The last part of this initial section of the form should have at least these two things:

- List the goals set with the student, the general responsibilities of the student, and/or specific projects completed.

- Did the student work the required number of hours to complete the fieldwork experience?

Evaluation Form Section Two: Core Competences

The following section of the proposed evaluation form would contain rating tables in which the fieldwork supervisor would use a defined scale to rate the student's performance in the various aspects of the ALA Core Competences. An example is given in Table 62 below. The rating scale uses '5' as best and '1' as worst.

Table 62. Sample competency section of proposed evaluation form

Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning	5	4	3	2	1	NA
The necessity of continuing professional development of practitioners in libraries and other information agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The role of the library in the lifelong learning of patrons, including an understanding of lifelong learning in the provision of quality service and the use of lifelong learning in the promotion of library services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learning theories, instructional methods, and achievement measures; and their application in libraries and other information agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The principles related to the teaching and learning of concepts, processes and skills used in seeking, evaluating, and using recorded knowledge and information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evaluation Form Section Three: Personal Characteristics

This section of the proposed evaluation form integrates the most commonly appearing characteristics from the analyzed library school evaluation forms with a few others suggested by respondents to the online survey and interviews. Characteristics are broken into these sections: general characteristics, relations with others, work habits, ability to learn, commitment, professionalism, work performance, and emotional attributes. A sample section of the form is given here with '5' as best and '1' as worst.

Table 63. Sample personal characteristics section of proposed evaluation form

General Characteristics	5	4	3	2	1	NA
Initiative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dependability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Creativity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Judgment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Decision-making skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reliability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Resourcefulness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Innovativeness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Curiosity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relations With Others						
Cooperation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interactions with staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interactions with customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Collaboration	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Customer Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Evaluation Form Section Four: Final Thoughts

The last section of the proposed evaluation form should provide the fieldwork supervisor the opportunity to write more narrative assessments not covered in the ratings scales from sections two and three. In this section, a variety of questions are suggested:

- Please comment on the student's strengths.

- Please comment on the student's areas for improvement.

- Please provide any other comments you have on this student not covered in this evaluation.

- If you had a vacancy, would you hire this student?

156

- Would you give this student a recommendation to a prospective employer?

This final section would also be used to give feedback to the library school about the host site supervisor's thoughts on the fieldwork experience. These could include:

- Do you have any thoughts on improving the fieldwork experience?

- How can the library school help you during the fieldwork experience?

- Would you like to host another fieldwork student?

- Do you believe that the library school has adequately prepared this student for work in a library/information institution?

- Did you/your institution benefit from this experience? If so, how?

The full example given in Appendix H is longer than each of the forty seven forms analyzed for this research. There are forty one separate competency statements alone in ALA's *Core Competences of Librarianship* document (see Appendix C), and when combined with a variety of personal characteristics, it is acknowledged that this form could be considered too lengthy and excessive by library schools. The researcher contends that the inclusion of a choice of NA for "not applicable" gives the supervisor the prerogative to exclude any unsuitable characteristic or competence for evaluation. The inclusion of the content for potential evaluation, however, gives a more accurate picture of the performance of the student, and therefore aids the library school is assessment.

Review of Methodology

There were three methods used in this research, and the study was conducted in three parts accordingly. First, an online survey was pre-tested, amended, and then distributed to electronic listservs. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling, and the final sample included 77 total respondents. Data was analyzed for frequencies and themes. After completion of the online survey, a total 25 interviews were conducted by phone or email. Responses were rated by two volunteer coders for prescribed topics. Finally, library school-issued fieldwork evaluation forms were collected by the researcher, analyzed for content, and summarized.

There are a few methodological issues that should be noted. It is acknowledged that the online survey resulted in a limited number of respondents. This could contribute to sampling error due to a lack of representative sample size. There is also potential for non-sampling error due to lack of veracity on the respondent's behalf. There is an inherent bias to respondents who choose to participate; perhaps those who are not partial to, or do not enjoy fieldwork supervision, chose not to participate.

There were possible technological limitations to the online survey, such as the lack of user interface testing and accessibility provision. Furthermore, three survey respondents indicated that the survey software was problematic on questions that required ranking of a given set of choices. This may have led to an initial drop-off of potential completed surveys.

For the interview portion of the research, there are also considerations. Interview questions conducted by email may not have provided enough opportunity for back and forth interaction between researcher and respondent, such as might be expected in a face-to-face or phone interview. The follow-up questions provided for the first and third interview question could be perceived as too leading, which could potentially create bias and limit responses. As the researcher was the only person to review and code the library school evaluation forms, there is a possibility for error. However, use of direct copying of items from the surveys into spreadsheet software for electronic grouping helps to minimize this risk.

The research methods explained in Chapter 3 are replicable. If this research were conducted again, the researcher would consider alternate methods of promoting the online survey, such as presenting and recruiting at public library conferences, conducting more interviews via phone for better follow up on responses, and use of a second coder for library school form analysis. The researcher is pleased with the utilization of recruitment business cards to solicit interview respondents. Not only was it portable, this method allowed for immediate personal interaction with public librarians, and provided a quick conduit to the survey on mobile devices in the form of a QR (quick response) code.

Significance of the Research to the Profession

Little research specifically targets FWSs for their perspectives and practices in the fieldwork experience. This dissertation has implications for practitioners, LIS education,

and the profession as a whole. As fieldwork could be considered a recruitment tool, it behooves us to examine it and implore FWS practitioners to consider their practices. According to an examination in 2012 of LIS webpages, fieldwork is offered in all but one English-speaking degree program, and therefore it is a definite component of LIS education. Also, professional organizations, such as ALISE, ALA, and American Association of School Librarians (AASL), have created competencies for librarians. These describe abilities and qualifications required of practitioners, in addition to theoretical knowledge, and thus invoke the fieldwork experience as a necessary tool to aid the student in becoming a competent practitioner. This study provided insight to the perspectives of fieldwork supervisors, and also gives an empirical basis on which to frame further research into fieldwork experiences.

Suggestions for Future Research

As stated in Chapter 1, there is a dearth of research into the practices of fieldwork supervisors. There are a number of possibilities to extend research about practicing fieldwork supervisors specifically, and about fieldwork in general. It has been 20 years since Howden's last comprehensive inquiry of all schools, and therefore another summary investigation is warranted. A gap in fieldwork research in library science is the lack of a current comprehensive analysis of fieldwork in library and information science programs (Ball 2008; Banks and Lents 1992), and such an overall picture would show how schools differ in incorporating the fieldwork supervisor in activities.

Another major gap is the paucity of input or recommendations from governing organizations, or groups at a national level, aside from the over-twenty-year-old Association for Library and Information Science Education's (ALISE) *Guidelines for Practices and Principles in the Design, Operation, and Evaluation of Student Field Experiences* (1990). There does not appear to be a current 'Board for Librarianship' or 'Alliance of LIS Educators' that is making recommendations or creating accreditation requirements regarding fieldwork. ALA's 2008 *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies* make no mention of fieldwork at all.

Assessment of fieldwork is another area needing more exploration, and one in which national organizations should get involved. The discrepancies between library school programs as to grading and course credit merit study. Perhaps a recommended uniform rubric that could be modified by each school to lay out an assessment plan would be useful. Also, looking into the responsibility of assessment, and who it ultimately lies with, is lacking published research at this time.

Concerning the students and the effectiveness of fieldwork, and how it can be linked to career development or job satisfaction (Ricker 2005), it would be prudent to research whether or not students who have participated in fieldwork are perceived to be more qualified, or are given preference in hiring decisions based on participation in fieldwork (Grotzinger 1971; Samek and Oberg 1999). Some students believe that it does

help (Krichten, Stohr and Warlick 2009). Knowing how host sites view fieldwork experience on entry-level applicant resumes would be valuable (Ricker 2005).

It is noted that there is a drop off in research and publication related to fieldwork during the 1990s. This could be due to ALISE publishing its *Guidelines*. Perhaps the field now felt that there were standards to apply to the fieldwork experience, and there was little need for exploration until these had been applied. Or, it's possible that other topics, such as the rise of the Internet and development of online education, interrupted the mindset of researchers interested in fieldwork.

The results of this study indicate that there is evidently more research on fieldwork and fieldwork supervision that can and should be done. A last avenue for future research is to aim for a set of best practices in fieldwork supervision, expanding on the roles delineated in the ALISE *Guidelines*. These best practices should incorporate:

- How to select fieldwork students

- Methods for initial assessment of a student's capabilities and learning level

- Suggested activities appropriate for moving a student through the ZPD in order to gain more understanding of practical library knowledge

- A more inclusive and appropriate evaluation form for formal assessment of students, incorporating the American Library Association's *Core Competences of Librarianship*, actual library tasks, and suggested rubrics for evaluation

162

Conclusion

This research has helped to extend familiarity of the site supervisor's thoughts and actions related to fieldwork. It has assembled and synthesized the experiences of recent supervisors of fieldwork students, explored relationships between actual assessment practices versus what library schools prescribe, and provided opportunities for future research. Results demonstrated how the fieldwork experience mimics that of a learner moving through the Zone of Proximal Development and showed how the fieldwork supervisor serves as the "more capable peer" that guides the student through the zone by designing assignments and evaluating progress.

Though not always a required course, fieldwork is offered as part of all but one English-speaking library schools' curricula. The fieldwork experience is important to students, libraries, and library schools, and offers benefits to each. The supervisors of fieldwork students are an integral part of the experience, and the entire experience warrants further exploration through targeted research. In closing, one respondent said it best:

I think more people should supervise practicums. I believe it's one of the most important professional responsibilities we have: to provide meaningful and relevant (fieldwork) experiences.

REFERENCE LIST

Allal, Linda, and Greta Ducrey. (2000). Assessment of – or in – the Zone of Proximal Development. *Learning and Instruction* 10 (2): 137-152.

American Library Association. (2008). *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Science.* http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/sites/ala.org.accreditedprograms/files/cont ent/standards/standards_2008.pdf

American Library Association. (2009). *Core Competences of Librarianship.* http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org.educationcareers/files/content/ca reers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf

American Library Association. (2011). *Directory of ALA-Accredited Master's Programs in Library and Information Science.* http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/sites/ala.org.accreditedprograms/files/cont ent/directory/pdf/LIS%20DIR2009-2010.pdf

Anderson, Eugene, and Anne Shannon. (1988). Toward a Conceptualization of Mentoring. *Journal of Teacher Education* 39 (1): 38-42.

Ash, Doris, and Karen Levitt. (2003). Working Within the Zone of Proximal Development: Formative Assessment as Professional Development. *Journal of Science Teacher Education* 14 (1): 1-26.

Association for Library and Information Science Education, Information Organization Heads Task Force on Internships and Field Experiences. (1990). *Guidelines for Practices and Principles in the Design, Operation, and Evaluation of Student Field Experiences.* http://www.alise.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=49

Ball, Mary Alice. (2008). Practicums and Service Learning in LIS Education. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 49 (1): 70-82.

Banks, Julie and Ben Lents. (1992). A Practicum: Views of Two Supervising Librarians. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 33 (3): 241-247.

Barron, Daniel and Camellia Harris. (2004). Curriculum. *Library and Information Science Education Statistical Report.* http://ils.unc.edu/ALISE/2004

Becker, Nancy. (2000). Service Learning in the Curriculum: Preparing LIS Students for the Next Millennium. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 41 (4): 285-293.

Berg, Bruce. (2009). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Coleman, J. Gordon. (1989). The Role of the Practicum in Library Schools. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 30(1): 19-27.

Conant, Ralph. (1980). *The Conant Report: A Study of the Education of Librarians.* Cambridge, MS: MIT Press.

Damasco, Ione, and Melanie McGurr. (2008). A Survey of Cataloger Perspectives on Practicum Experiences. *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly* 45 (4): 43-64.

Daniels, Harry. (2008). *Vygotsky and Research.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Dewey, Melvil. (1879). Apprenticeship of Librarians. *Library Journal* 4: 147-148.

Donnelly, June. (1925). *Report of Committee on Fieldwork in the AALS Member Schools.* American Association of Library Schools Conference, Seattle, WA. Courtesy of the University of Illinois, American Library Association Archives.

Dougherty, Richard, and Wendy Lougee. (1983). Research Library Residencies: A New Model for Professional Development. *Library Journal* 108 (13): 1322-1324.

Elmborg, James, Heather Leighton, Holly Huffman, Jane Bradbury, Tim Bryant, Denise Britigan, Connie Ghinazzi, Stacy Light, Sarah Andrews, and Chris Miller. (2001). Service Learning in the Library and Information Science Curriculum: The Perspectives and Experiences of One Multimedia/User Education Class. *Research Strategies* 18 (4): 265-281.

Elo, Satu and Helvi Kyngas. (2008). The Qualitative Content Analysis Process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 62 (1): 107-115.

Ferrer-Vinent, and Karen Sobel. (2011). A Study of Master of Library Science Candidates and Librarians at a Practicum Site Library. *New Library World* 112 (7/8): 365-376.

Futas, Elizabeth. (1994). The Practicum in Collection Development: A Debate. In Johnson, Peggy, and Sheila Intner (eds.), *Recruiting, Educating, and Training Librarians for Collection Development* (145-156). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Genovese, Robert. (1991). The Use of Library School Students for Technical Services Projects. *Technical Services Quarterly* 8 (4): 63-69.

Gooden, Rachelle. (2006). What's the Point if You Don't Get Paid? *Access* 12 (3): 64-6.

Gravetter, Frederick, and Lori-Ann Forzano. (2009). *Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences.* Belmont, California: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Grotzinger, Laurel. (1971). The Status of 'Practicum' in Graduate Library Schools. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 11 (4): 332-339.

Hacker, Rupert. (1987, November). The Role of Practical Work in Library and Information Science Curricula. Paper presented at the International Conference on Library and Information Science Education, National Taiwan University.
168

Hempstead, John. (1971). Internship and Practical Application in Education School

    Library Personnel. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 12

    (2): 116-132.

Holland, George. (2006). Professional Surprise. *The Australian Library Journal* 55 (3):

    231-234.

Holstein, James and Jaber Gubrium. (2002). Active Interviewing. In Weinberg, Darin

    (ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods* (112-126). Malden, Massachusetts:

    Blackwell Publishers.

Howden, Norman. (1992). Practicums and Field Experiences. *Journal of Library*

    Administration 16 (1-2): 123-140.

Hoy, Marian. (2011). Building Pathways to Working with Collections: Can Internships

    and Student Work Experience Help? *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*

    42 (1): 29-42.

Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang, and Sarah Shannon. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content

    Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research* 15(9): 1277-1288.

Ivic, Ivan. (2000). Lev S. Vygotsky. *Prospects: The Quarterly Review of Comparative*

    Education. 24 (3/4): 471-485.

Katz, William, Charles Bunge, and Samuel Rothstein. (1989). *Rothstein on Reference:*

    With Some Help From Friends. New York: Haworth Press.

169

Kim, Namsook. (2011). "Transformative New Teaching: Adolescent English Language Learners' Multidimensional Language and Identity Development." PhD dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo.

Kraha, Amanda. (2012). Research Consultant, University of North Texas Information Research and Analysis Lab. Personal communication.

Krichten, Molly, Sarah Stohr, and Stefanie Warlick. (2009). Practicum and Internship Experiences in LIS Education: A Perspective From ALA Emerging Leaders. In Roy, Loriene, Kelly Jensen, and Alex Meyers (eds.) *Service Learning: Linking Library Education and Practice.* Chicago: American Library Association.

Krippendorff, Klaus. (2013). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Larned, J.N., Adelaide Hasse, Eliza Browning, and Caroline Garland. (1896). Report of Committee on Library Schools. *Library Journal* 21: 93-97.

Lee, Suzan. (2003). *Internships or Practicums? Does it Matter?* Retrieved from http://www.liscareer.com/lee_internships.htm/

Leonard, Barbara, and Donna Pontau. (1991). Sculpting Future Librarians Through Structured Practicums: The Role of Academic Librarians. *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 17 (1): 26-30.

Lyders, Josette, and Patricia Wilson. (1991). Field Experience in Library Education: A National Survey. *School Library Journal* 37 (1): 31-35.

Malik, Amara, and Kanwal Ameen. (2010). Effectiveness of Library Practicum: Perceptions of LIS Graduates in Pakistan. *Library Review* 59 (8): 573-584.

Mardis, Marcia. (2007). From One-to-One to One-to-Many: A Study of the Practicum in the Transition from Teacher to School Library Media Specialist. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 48 (3): 218-235.

Markey, Karen. (2004). Current Educational Trends in the Information and Library Science Curriculum. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 45 (4): 317-339.

Maurer, Margaret, and Don Wicks. (2005). Collaboration in Collection Management. *Resource Sharing and Information Networks* 17 (1): 57-75.

McGurr, Melanie, and Ione Damasco. (2010). Improving the Practicum or Internship Experience in Cataloging. *Technical Services Quarterly* 27 (1): 1-16.

McKechnie, Lynne. (1996). "Opening the Preschoolers' Door to Learning: An Ethnographic Study of the Use of Public Libraries by Preschool Girls." PhD dissertation, University of Western Ontario.

Mediavilla, Cindy (ed.). (2006). *Public Library Internships: Advice from the Field.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Metcalf, Keyes, John Russel, and Andrew Osborn. (1943). *The Program of Instruction in Library Schools.* Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

Miller, Kim, DeAnne Swan, Terri Craig, Michael Freeman, Natasha Isaac, Patrick O'Shea, Peter Schilling, and Jennifer Scotto. (2011). *Public Library Survey: Fiscal Year 2009.* (IMLS-2011-PLS-02). Washington, D.C.: Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Monroe, Margaret. (1981). Issues in Field Experience as an Element in the Library School Curriculum. *Journal of Education for Librarianship* 22 (1): 57-73.

Moynahan, Sharon. (1997). Walk in My Shoes: The Case for a Practicum With a Publisher. *Library Acquisitions: Practice and Theory* 21 (2): 107-114.

Murray, Margo. (2001). *Beyond the Myths and Magic of Mentoring.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Nakano, Kimberly, and Janet Morrison. (1992). Public-Service Experience in the Introductory Reference Course: A Model Program and Survey of Accredited Library Schools. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 33 (2): 110-128.

Nassimbeni, Mary. (1990). Role and Value of Fieldwork in Education for Library and Information Science: A Cross-Site Comparison of Two Case Studies. *South African Journal of Library and Information Science* 58 (1): 75-86.

Neuendorf, Kimberly. (2002). *The Content Analysis Guidebook.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Nugent, Christine. (1998). Internet Training Through Collaboration. *College and Undergraduate Libraries* 5 (1): 15-26.

Nutefall, Jennifer. (2012). Structuring a Successful Instruction Internship. *College & Undergraduate Libraries* 19 (1): 80-94.

Oberg, Dianne, and Toni Samek. (1999). Humble Empowerment: The LIS Practicum. *PNLA Quarterly* 63 (3): 20-22.

Ottolenghi, Carol. (2012). Defensive Promotion. *AALL Spectrum* 16 (9): 16-17.

Palmer, Roger. (1975). Internships and Practicums. In Cassata, Mary and Herman Totten (eds.), *The Administrative Aspects of Librarianship* (239-253). Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.

Plummer, Mary, Salome Fairchild, Katharine Sharp, Alice Kroeger, Mary Robbins, and E.H. Anderson. (1903). Report of the Committee on Library Training. *Library Journal* 28: 83-101.

Powell, Ronald. (1997). *Basic Research Methods for Librarians.* Greenwich, Conn: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Prytherch, R. J. (1982). Towards an Understanding and Evaluation of Student Fieldwork in Libraries. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 22 (3): 173-186.

Qualtrics. (2012). *Qualtrics Security White Paper: Why Should I Trust Qualtrics With My Sensitive Data?* Version 1.2. http://www.qualtrics.com/docs/QualtricsSecurityWhitepaper.pdf

Reece, Ernest. (1933). Work-contacts for library-school students. *Library Quarterly* 3 (2): 170-179.

Ricker, Jennifer. (2005). *Public Librarians' Perceived Value of Experiential Learning* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC.

Riffe, Daniel, Stephen Lacy, and Frederick Fico. (1998). *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Rothstein, Samuel. (1989). A Forgotten Issue: Practice Work in American Library Education. *Reference Librarian* 25-26: 199-224. (Republish of 1968 article)

Ryan, Gery, and H. Russell Bernard. (2000). Data Management and Analysis Methods. In Denzin, Norman, and Yvonna Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Samek, Toni, and Dianne Oberg. (1998). A New Model for Field-Based Learning in Today's LIS Education. *Feliciter* 44 (5): 34-37.

-----. (1999). *Learning to Think Like a Professional: Reflections From LIS Students.* Paper presented at the Canadian Association for Information Science Conference.

Sankey, John. (2010). All Guts, No Glory: A Practicum in Cataloging and Classification. *PNLA Quarterly* 74 (2): 4-10.

Schock, Trisha. (2011). "Teacher Perceptions and Curricular Analysis of Elementary Library Media Technology Use." PhD dissertation, Walden University.

Schutt, Russell. (2006). *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Scott, David. (2008). *Critical Essays on Major Curriculum Theorists.* New York: Routledge.

Silver, Isabel. (2006). "The LIS Practicum: An Internship with Academic Credit." In Mediavilla, Cindy (ed.), *Public Library Internships: Advice From the Field* (19-34). Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Smith, Linda. (2007). New Models of Recruitment and (Continuing) Education for Sci-Tech Librarianship. *Science and Technology Libraries* 27 (1): 173-184.

St. John, Francis. (1938). *Internship in the Library Profession.* Chicago: American

    Library Association.

Stallman, Esther. (1954). *Library Internships: History, Purpose, and a Proposal.*

    (Occasional Papers Number 37). University of Illinois Library School.

Starmer, Mary. (2004). Benefits of Practicum Students in Preservation: The Value of the

    Experience to the Department, Students, and Field. *Collection Management* 29

    (2): 33-40.

Stielow, Frederick, and Helen Tibbo. (1987). Collection Analysis and the Humanities: A

    Practicum with the RLG Conspectus. *Journal of Education for Library and

    Information Science* 27 (3): 148-157.

Taylor, George, and Loretta MacKenney. (2008). *Improving Human Learning in the

    Classroom: Theories and Teaching Practices.* Lanham, MD: Rowman &

    Littlefield Education.

Tharp, Roland, and Ronald Gallimore. (1988). *Rousing Minds to Life: Teaching,

    Learning, and Schooling in Social Context.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge

    University Press.

Tietjen, Mildred. (1977). Playing the Field…or Practice Makes Perfect. *Wilson Library

    Bulletin* 52 (1): 61-63.

Tilley, Christine. (1997). The Benefits of Field Work for Students: The Queensland University of Technology Experience. *Education for Library and Information Services Australia* 14 (3): 42-56.

Van Deusen, Neil. (1946). Field Work in Accredited Library Schools. *College and Research Libraries* 7(3): 249-255.

Van Deusen, Neil. (1949). Professional Education for Librarianship: Summary. In Berelson, Bernard. (ed.), *Education for Librarianship: Papers Presented at the Library Conference, University of Chicago, August 16-21, 1948* (187-203).

Vann, Sarah. (1961). *Training for Librarianship before 1923.* Chicago: American Library Association.

Vygotsky, Lev. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes.* Harvard University Press.

-----. (1986). *Thought and Language.* Cambridge, MS: MIT Press. First published 1934.

-----. (1987). *The Collected Works of L.S. Vygotsky.* Edited by R. W. Rieber and A.S. Carton. New York: Plenum Press.

-----. (2004). *The Essential Vygotsky: Collected Works of L.S. Vygotsky.* Edited by R.W. Rieber and D.K. Robinson. New York: Plenum Press.

Ward, Barbara. (1973). A Rationale for Field Experience in Library Education. *Journal of Education for Librarianship* 13 (4): 232-237.

White, Carl. (1961). *The Origins of the American Library School.* New York: Scarecrow Press.

Williamson, Charles. (1923). *Training for Library Service: A Report Prepared for the Carnegie Corporation of New York.* Boston: Updike Press.

Witucke, Virginia. (1976). Library School Policies Toward Pre-Professional Work Experience. *Journal of Education for Librarianship* 16 (3): 162-172.

Wright, Helen. (1949). Discussion. In Berelson, Bernard. (ed.), *Education for Librarianship: Papers Presented at the Library Conference, University of Chicago, August 16-21, 1948* (38-43).

Wyatt, Erin. (2010). "Middle School Students in Virtual Learning Environments." PhD dissertation, University of North Texas.

Young, Heartsill. (ed.). (1983). *The ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science.* Chicago, IL: American Library Association.

APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval

Institutional Review Board
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
P.O. Box 425619, Denton, TX 76204-5619
940-898-3378   FAX 940-898-4416
e-mail: IRB@twu.edu

TWU

EXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

DENTON DALLAS HOUSTON

April 16, 2012

Ms. Sian Brannon

████████████

Dear Ms. Brannon:
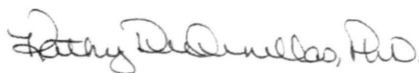
Re: *Examining the Fieldwork Experience from the Site Supervisor Perspective: A Mixed-Methods*
      Study Using Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory (Protocol =: 17025)

The above referenced study has been reviewed by the TWU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and was
determined to be exempt from further review.

If applicable, agency approval letters must be submitted to the IRB upon receipt PRIOR to any data
collection at that agency. Because a signed consent form is not required for exempt studies, the filing
of signatures of participants with the TWU IRB is not necessary.

Any modifications to this study must be submitted for review to the IRB using the Modification
Request Form. Additionally, the IRB must be notified immediately of any unanticipated incidents. If
you have any questions, please contact the TWU IRB.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kathy DeOrnellas, Chair
Institutional Review Board - Denton

cc.   Dr. Ling Hwey Jeng, School of Library & Information Studies
      Dr. Lynn Akin, School of Library & Information Studies
      Graduate School

180

TWU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

MODIFICATION REQUEST FORM

Complete this form when you would like to request a change on an approved study. This change could be a change in the research team, data collection sites, protocol (e.g., compensation, study procedures, etc.), and/or the informed consent. Submit this signed form along with copies of any new or modified materials you describe below to the IRB. NOTE: You may not implement any changes to an IRB-approved study until your Modification Request has been approved.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Sian Brannon

DATE APPROVED BY IRB (most recent):   4/16/2012

TITLE OF STUDY: EXAMINING THE FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE FROM THE SITE SUPERVISOR PERSPECTIVE: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY USING VYGOTSKY'S ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Provide a detailed description of the modification(s) requested:
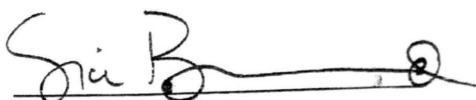
Propose modification of IRB application question #3: participant recruitment process. Researcher needs to reopen survey for an additional time period of 2 months during Fall 2012.

Propose modification of researcher's recruitment email for second data collection period.

Provide a list of any new or modified documents materials and attach these items to this form:

Modified recruitment email

Principal Investigator Assurance: I certify that the revised information provided for this project is correct and that no other procedures or forms will be used. I confirm that no changes will be implemented until I receive written approval for the changes from the TWU IRB.

_____   9-4-12
Signature of Principal Investigator   Date

APPROVED:

_____   9/7/12
Signature of IRB Chair / Co-Chair   Date

181

APPENDIX B

Survey Instrument

Q1 Which library-related degree do you have?

- ⭕ MLS (1)
- ⭕ MLIS (2)
- ⭕ MIS (3)
- ⭕ Degree currently in progress (4)
- ⭕ No Master's-level degree (5)
- ⭕ Other (6) _____

Q2 How many fieldwork students have you supervised at a public library during the last five years?

- ⭕ None (1)
- ⭕ 1-2 (2)
- ⭕ 3-4 (3)
- ⭕ 5 or more (4)

If None Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q3 In what year did you receive your degree?

- ⭕ 1940-1949 (1)
- ⭕ 1950-1959 (2)
- ⭕ 1960-1969 (3)
- ⭕ 1970-1979 (4)
- ⭕ 1980-1989 (5)
- ⭕ 1990-1999 (6)
- ⭕ 2000-2009 (7)
- ⭕ 2010 - present (8)
- ⭕ Degree currently in progress (9)
- ⭕ No Master's-level degree (10)

Q4 Which of these best describes your position at the public library?

- ○ Director (1)
- ○ Branch/Department Manager (2)
- ○ Public Services Librarian (3)
- ○ Children's Librarian (4)
- ○ Reference Librarian (5)
- ○ Adult Services Librarian (6)
- ○ Technical Services Librarian (7)
- ○ Outreach Librarian (8)
- ○ Other (please explain) (9) _____

Q5 Are you familiar with these knowledge and competency statements provided by library professional organizations? (check all that apply)

- ❑ ALA Core Competencies for Librarianship (1)
- ❑ ALSC Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Public Libraries (2)
- ❑ RUSA Professional Competencies for Reference and User Services Librarians (3)
- ❑ YALSA Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth (4)
- ❑ Other (please list) (5) _____

Initial Assessment

Q6 What do you look for in a fieldwork student? (check all that apply)

- ❑ Interest in certain area of librarianship (1)
- ❑ Courses they have taken (2)
- ❑ Availability/matching schedule (3)
- ❑ Free labor (4)
- ❑ Value to library needs (5)
- ❑ Grades received in their coursework (6)
- ❑ Personality (7)
- ❑ Other (please explain) (8) _____

Q7 What occurs on your typical "first day" with a fieldwork student? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Introductions to staff (1)
- ☐ Discussion of expectations (2)
- ☐ Discussion of goals/learning objectives (3)
- ☐ Review of coursework (4)
- ☐ Training on integrated library system (5)
- ☐ Tour of library (6)
- ☐ Discussion on what student has learned in school (7)
- ☐ Put into assignments right away (8)
- ☐ Other (please list other activities typically performed) (9) _____

Q8 How do you discover what your fieldwork student already knows about the library work? Please rank all that apply with 1 being the most used. You will need to click and drag each answer to the order you want.

_____ Discussion with student (1)
_____ Discussion with fellow library staff after student begins (2)
_____ Discussion with faculty at library school (3)
_____ Discussion with staff at library school (4)
_____ Analysis of student's transcript (5)
_____ No discussion at all (6)
_____ Other (please explain) (7)

Q9 Why did you rank your #1 choice as the most used method in the question above?

Q10 How do you know that your initial assessment of the student was successful?

Q11 Do you set goals or student learning objectives for your fieldwork student?

○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

Q12 How do you set these goals (student learning objectives)? (please rank all that apply with 1 being the most used)

_____ Discussion with student (1)
_____ Discussion with fellow library staff (2)
_____ Discussion with faculty at library school (3)
_____ Discussion with staff at library school (4)
_____ Review of fieldwork course syllabus (5)
_____ No goals set (6)
_____ Other (please explain) (7)

Student Progress

Q13 After determining what the student knows, how do you design assignments for the fieldwork students you supervise? (please rank all that apply with 1 being the most used)

_____ Discuss options with student (1)
_____ Speak with other library staff about potential assignments (2)
_____ Tasks arise from the needs of the library, regardless of wishes of the student (3)
_____ Tasks arise from the needs of the library, are related to wishes of the student (4)
_____ Follow guidance from library school (5)
_____ Every student does the same assignments (6)
_____ Other (please explain) (7)

Q14 How do students participate in assignments? (please rank all that apply with 1 being the most used)

_____ Shadowing a staff person without intrusion (1)
_____ Interactive observation of staff (2)
_____ Hands-on tasks (3)
_____ Orientations/Training sessions (4)
_____ Written research on assigned topics (5)
_____ Other (please explain) (6)

Q15 Please think about the ALA Core Competencies of Librarianship. http://www.ala.org/ala/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcoreco mpstat09.pdf How much time during the fieldwork experience are the following competencies incorporated in duties or assignments? (Total should equal 100%.)

_____ Foundations of the profession (1)
_____ Information Resources (2)
_____ Organization of recorded knowledge and information (3)
_____ Technological knowledge and skills (4)
_____ Reference and user services (5)
_____ Research (8)
_____ Continuing education and lifelong learning (6)
_____ Administration and management (7)

Q16 What other topics do you discuss with your students? (check all that apply)

- ❑ Experiences in different classes (1)
- ❑ Their professors (2)
- ❑ Personal characteristics such as attitude and work ethic (3)
- ❑ Setting personal goals (4)
- ❑ Mentoring opportunities (5)
- ❑ Job placement opportunities (6)
- ❑ Time management (7)
- ❑ Professional organizations and development opportunities (8)
- ❑ Networking (9)
- ❑ Communication Skills (10)
- ❑ Other (please explain) (11) _____

Q17 How do you know when your assignments are successful?

Student Assessment

Q18 How do you formally evaluate your student?

- ○ Complete evaluation form provided by library school (1)
- ○ Produce a written report (2)
- ○ Provide a suggested grade without a report (3)
- ○ Do not perform formal evaluation (4)
- ○ Other (please explain) (5) _____

Q19 How do you informally evaluate your student?

- ○ Compare student to past fieldwork students (1)
- ○ Get input from library staff (2)
- ○ Compare student against ALA Competencies (3)
- ○ Compare student to yourself (4)
- ○ Other (please explain) (5) _____

Q20 How many times during the student's fieldwork term do you formally evaluate them?

○ Never (1)
○ 1 (2)
○ 2 (3)
○ 3 or more (4)

Q21 Do you normally conduct a formal mid-term evaluation with the student?

○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Q23

Q22 If so, do you use the results to change the planned assignments and activities?

○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

Q23 Do you involve the fieldwork student in creating a formal mid-term or final evaluation?

○ Never (1)
○ Infrequently (2)
○ Sometimes (3)
○ Frequently (4)
○ Always (5)

Q24 Are satisfaction or completion of goals/student learning objectives agreed on at the beginning of the fieldwork experience part of your final evaluation?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)
- ○ Not applicable (3)

Q25 How do you determine that the student satisfied the goals/student learning objectives agreed upon at the beginning of the fieldwork experience? (check all that apply)

- ❏ Discussion with student (1)
- ❏ Observation of performance (2)
- ❏ Use of rubric (3)
- ❏ Review of work products (4)
- ❏ Other (please explain) (5) _____

Q26 How do you know that your final evaluation was successful?

Final Thoughts

Q27 If you participated in a fieldwork experience for your library-related degree, did your experience influence how you handle current fieldwork students?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)
- ○ Didn't have a field experience as part of my degree (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Q29

Q28 In what ways did your own fieldwork experience influence how you handle current fieldwork students?

Regarding supervision of fieldwork students, how often do you:

	Frequency				
	Never (1)	Infrequently (2)	Sometimes (3)	Frequently (4)	Always (5)
Have important skills that you try to teach others? (Q29)	O	O	O	O	O
Try to pass along the knowledge you have gained through your personal experiences? (Q30)	O	O	O	O	O
Feel as though you have made a difference to many students? (Q31)	O	O	O	O	O
Think that you will be remembered by the student? (Q32)	O	O	O	O	O

191

Q33 How do you gauge that you conducted a useful fieldwork experience? (please check all that apply)

❑ Evaluation from student (1)
❑ Evaluation from fellow library staff/peers (2)
❑ Personal satisfaction (3)
❑ Continued involvement with fieldwork students from same library school (4)
❑ Student met goals/student learning objectives (5)
❑ Other (6) _____

Q34 Please give any overall thoughts or feelings you have about supervising fieldwork students.

Q35 If you are willing to be contacted for a follow up interview regarding how you conduct your fieldwork experiences, please provide your name, email, and/or phone number here.

APPENDIX C

American Library Association *Core Competences*

ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship   Final version
Approved by the ALA Executive Board, October 25th 2008
Approved and adopted as policy by the ALA Council, January 27th 2009

This document defines the basic knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies. Librarians working in school, academic, public, special, and governmental libraries, and in other contexts will need to possess specialized knowledge beyond that specified here.

CONTENTS
1. Foundations of the Profession
2. Information Resources
3. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information
4. Technological Knowledge and Skills
5. Reference and User Services
6. Research
7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning
8. Administration and Management

A person graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies should know and, where appropriate, be able to employ:

1. Foundations of the Profession
  1A. The ethics, values, and foundational principles of the library and information profession.
  1B. The role of library and information professionals in the promotion of democratic principles and intellectual freedom (including freedom of expression, thought, and conscience).
  1C. The history of libraries and librarianship.
  1D. The history of human communication and its impact on libraries.
  1E. Current types of library (school, public, academic, special, etc.) and closely related information agencies.
  1F. National and international social, public, information, economic, and cultural policies and trends of significance to the library and information profession.
  1G. The legal framework within which libraries and information agencies operate. That framework includes laws relating to copyright, privacy, freedom of expression, equal rights (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act), and intellectual property.
  1H. The importance of effective advocacy for libraries, librarians, other library workers, and library services.
  1I. The techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.

1J. Effective communication techniques (verbal and written).

1K. Certification and/or licensure requirements of specialized areas of the profession.

2. Information Resources

2A. Concepts and issues related to the lifecycle of recorded knowledge and information, from creation through various stages of use to disposition.

2B. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the acquisition and disposition of resources, including evaluation, selection, purchasing, processing, storing, and deselection.

2C. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the management of various collections.

2D. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the maintenance of collections, including preservation and conservation.

3. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information

3A. The principles involved in the organization and representation of recorded knowledge and information.

3B. The developmental, descriptive, and evaluative skills needed to organize recorded knowledge and information resources.

3C. The systems of cataloging, metadata, indexing, and classification standards and methods used to organize recorded knowledge and information.

4. Technological Knowledge and Skills

4A. Information, communication, assistive, and related technologies as they affect the resources, service delivery, and uses of libraries and other information agencies.

4B. The application of information, communication, assistive, and related technology and tools consistent with professional ethics and prevailing service norms and applications.

4C. The methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services.

4D. The principles and techniques necessary to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovations in order to recognize and implement relevant technological improvements.

5. Reference and User Services

5A. The concepts, principles, and techniques of reference and user services that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information to individuals of all ages and groups.

5B. Techniques used to retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse sources for use by individuals of all ages and groups.

5C. The methods used to interact successfully with individuals of all ages and groups to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance in their use of recorded knowledge and information.

5D. Information literacy/information competence techniques and methods, numerical literacy, and statistical literacy.

5E. The principles and methods of advocacy used to reach specific audiences to promote and explain concepts and services.

5F. The principles of assessment and response to diversity in user needs, user communities, and user preferences.

5G. The principles and methods used to assess the impact of current and emerging situations or circumstances on the design and implementation of appropriate services or resource development.

6. Research

6A. The fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

6B. The central research findings and research literature of the field.

6C. The principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.

7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning

7A. The necessity of continuing professional development of practitioners in libraries and other information agencies.

7B. The role of the library in the lifelong learning of patrons, including an understanding of lifelong learning in the provision of quality service and the use of lifelong learning in the promotion of library services.

7C. Learning theories, instructional methods, and achievement measures; and their application in libraries and other information agencies.

7D. The principles related to the teaching and learning of concepts, processes and skills used in seeking, evaluating, and using recorded knowledge and information.

8. Administration and Management

8A. The principles of planning and budgeting in libraries and other information agencies.

8B. The principles of effective personnel practices and human resource development.

8C. The concepts behind, and methods for, assessment and evaluation of library services and their outcomes.

8D. The concepts behind, and methods for, developing partnerships, collaborations, networks, and other structures with all stakeholders and within communities served.

8E. The concepts behind, issues relating to, and methods for, principled, transformational leadership.

APPENDIX D

Survey Solicitation Email

(Apologies for cross-posting!) My name is Sian Brannon and I am a doctoral student in the School of Library and Information Studies at Texas Woman's University. I would like to invite you to participate in my dissertation research study entitled Examining the Fieldwork Experience from the Site Supervisor Perspective: A mixed-methods study using Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory.

The purpose of this research is to determine the current practices of public library fieldwork supervisors. Little other research delves into the practices of the supervisor with regard to their role as the "more capable peer" in the fieldwork experience. The researcher aims to describe interactions with students, identify activities performed, and gather information about student assessment.

You may participate if you hold a Master's degree from an ALA-accredited library school and have supervised at least one fieldwork student in a public library within the past five years. Participants will be asked to complete an online survey which is expected to take between 15 and 30 minutes to complete. You may then elect to provide contact information with which I can contact you for a brief follow-up interview.

A possible risk in this study is discomfort with these questions you are asked. You may stop answering questions at any time and end the survey. Another risk in this study is loss of confidentiality. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. The survey responses will be deleted within 1 years after the dissertation is finished. The results of the study may be reported in scientific magazines or journals, but your name or any other identifying information will not be included.

There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, and internet transactions.

More information about the study can be found at this website: https://sites.google.com/site/fieldworksupervisors/. If you decide to participate after visiting the site, you can access the survey there.

If you have any questions, please contact me at sbrannon@twu.edu or my advisor, Dr. Lynn Akin at lakin@twu.edu. Thank you for your consideration.

Sian Brannon

Second recruitment email:

Do you have a new fieldwork or practicum student at your public library this fall? Would you like to know how other public library fieldwork experiences are structured?

My name is Sian Brannon and I am a doctoral student in the School of Library and Information Studies at Texas Woman's University. I would like to invite you to participate in my dissertation research study entitled <u>Examining the Fieldwork Experience from the Site Supervisor Perspective: A mixed-methods study using Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory</u>. The purpose of this research is to determine the current practices of public library fieldwork supervisors.

You may participate if you hold a Master's degree from an ALA-accredited library school and have supervised at least one fieldwork student in a public library within the past five years. Participants will be asked to complete an online survey which is expected to take between 15 and 30 minutes to complete.

A possible risk in this study is discomfort with these questions you are asked. You may stop answering questions at any time and end the survey. Another risk in this study is loss of confidentiality. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. The survey responses will be deleted within 1 years after the dissertation is finished. The results of the study may be reported in scientific magazines or journals, but your name or any other identifying information will not be included.

There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, and internet transactions.

More information about the study can be found at this website: https://sites.google.com/site/fieldworksupervisors/. If you decide to participate after visiting the site, you can access the survey there.

If you have any questions, please contact me at sbrannon@twu.edu or my advisor, Dr. Lynn Akin at lakin@twu.edu. Thank you for your consideration.

Sian Brannon

APPENDIX E

Interview Questions

1. What role do you see yourself in when supervising a fieldwork student? Do you see yourself as more of a supervisor, teacher, mentor...

2. How do you know what a student is capable of when you first start working with them?

3. What do you do during the fieldwork experience to guide the students? Can you be more specific about the activities that you have your students do? (solo? Team? Projects? Observation activities? ...)

4. Please explain how you grade/assess/evaluate the student throughout the experience?

5. What do you think makes a fieldwork experience worthwhile or successful?

APPENDIX F

Coding Checklist and Matrix

Interview Concepts/Coding Checklist

Role – a character assigned or assumed; a socially expected behavior pattern usually determined by an individual's status in a particular society

http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/role

- Supervisor
- Colleague
- Teacher
- Mentor
- Friend
- Partner
- Manager
- Trainer
- Leader
- Instructor
- Faculty

- Coordinator
- Professor
- Advisor
- Example
- Director
- Master
- Counselor
- Tutor
- Associate
- More knowledgeable other
- Fellow

Methods of knowing what student is capable of – how a fieldwork supervisor ascertains the abilities or personal qualities of the fieldwork student

- Conversation, talking to
- Review of initial performance
- Transcript
- Student provides proof through sample projects/papers
- Information from faculty/school
- Observations
- References from other employers
- Input from staff

Guiding the students – the manner in which the fieldwork supervisor interacts with the students

- Show
- Indicate
- Lead
- Conduct
- Direct
- Steer
- Pilot
- Impart
- Drive
- Advice
- Checklists
- Instruction
- Model
- List outcomes
- Set objectives

Specific activities – What assignments does the fieldwork supervisor give to the fieldwork student?

- Solo
- Team
- Project
- Competencies
- Task
- Duty
- Responsibility
- Objectives
- Assignment
- Paper

Evaluation Method – how the fieldwork supervisor determines overall performance, results, and competencies of the fieldwork student throughout the experience

- Grade
- Rank
- Evaluate
- Quality
- Assess
- Review
- Judge
- Appraise
- Estimate
- Rate

Worth of fieldwork experience – What qualities or results does the fieldwork supervisor indicate as justifying their participation in the fieldwork experience?

- Value
- Significance
- Success
- Importance
- Achievement
- Triumph
- Worthwhile
- Deserving
- Merit
- Appreciate
- Gains
- Weight

Zone of Proximal Development

In its simplest form, cognitive constructivism as broad learning theory describes how a learner comes to know something, and that **acquired knowledge is built on what the learner already knows**. It encompasses learning experiences where emphasis is moved from the traditional teacher-student hierarchy to where the **student becomes responsible for participating actively in their learning**. Piaget was instrumental in developing constructivist theory as a way for educators to understand what learners should know at certain ages, and understand that learners cannot simply accept and know information, but that they must assimilate their own knowledge (Bransford, Brown, and Cooking 1999).

As a subset of constructivism, sociocultural theory explains how cognitive development is integrated into social interactions, organized activities, and culture (Tharp and Gallimore 1988). Vygotsky was a psychologist who is considered a pioneer in sociocultural theory (Daniels 2008). In contrast to Piaget's work that emphasized development before learning, Vygotsky's work **integrated discovery, learning, and development simultaneously through social interaction**. In the 1930s, Vygotsky developed the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD) theory, which **assimilates the concepts of modeling and imitation, and integrates previously-learned behaviors with the guidance of an expert in order to extend what a student knows**. Essentially, there are problems that one can solve independently; however, **with the collaboration of another, more knowledgeable person, the novice or apprentice can proceed to a**

205

higher level of intellectual development (Taylor and MacKenney 2008). Vygotsky's

(1978, 86) definition of the ZPD is "the distance between the actual developmental level

as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as

determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more
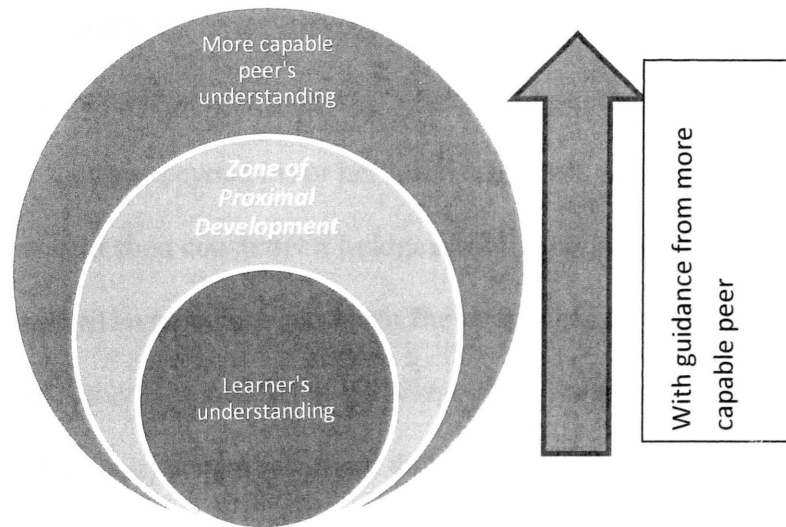
capable peers."

The "Learner's understanding" area is a representation of what the learner

currently knows. With guidance from a more capable peer, the learner progresses through

the "Zone of Proximal Development" to obtain some of the "More capable peer's

understanding." This **movement can take place in steps, or scaffolds, or it can be one**

swift movement, depending on the guidance of the more capable peer. It is assumed

that after the guidance period, the learner's knowledge base will expand to include what

the more capable peer knows about the concepts he or she is studying.

It has been said that the "heuristic value of the (ZPD) has not been sufficiently exploited" (Ivic 2000, 482), and this research aims to further examine the theory. The concepts of the ZPD can be reflected in the library science fieldwork experience as well as in traditional classroom settings. The **student serves as the apprentice learner who has a knowledge base in the form of a theoretical framework of the field provided by a library and information science curriculum**, and who is now dependent on the intervention of a more capable peer in the form of the FWS to guide him or her to more practical knowledge concepts beyond his or her reach. The FWS **must initially evaluate a fieldwork student, and then construct a bridge of assignments and teachable moments for the student so he or she can learn the practical knowledge required** of public librarians. The activities contained in the bridge can be negotiated with the student, directed by the library school faculty or dictated solely by the FWS.

There are three things necessary for the ZPD approach to function: initial knowledge of what the learner can do, a more capable peer who devises a method to share more understanding of concepts, and a shared agreement of how progress will be gauged (Scott 2008, 87).Once the fieldwork experience is complete, and in order to determine if the ZPD approach was successful, there is a **need for assessment on the part of the FWS to determine whether the student has not only completed the progression agreed upon initially, but also to evaluate whether or not the student obtained any of the "more capable peer's" understanding**.

The FWS of a library science student intervenes in his or her intellectual development, advancing him or her from the formal and theoretical knowledge of his or her anticipated degree through a series of diminishingly structured approaches until the student can perform practical tasks unassisted. They aid the student in **rearranging what he or she has learned through his or her degree program in concordance with real-world examples**. Vygotsky did not prescribe in his writings what assistance the more knowledgeable person should provide an apprentice beyond demonstration and putting forth questions to inspire thought (Daniels 2001). Not all library schools provide guidance on this aspect for FWSs, either. It is up to the FWS to determine how to move the student through the ZPD.

Research Questions

The proposed study will **identify FWS' thoughts and behaviors in their fieldwork supervision experiences related to Vygotsky's ZPD theory**. Specific questions include:

R1: To what extent does the FWS perform an initial assessment of the student?

R2: In what ways does the FWS **move the student through the ZPD**?

R3: How does the FWS **assess** the student's progression through the zone?

R4: How does the FWS feel about their **role** in the fieldwork experience?

208

These questions are posed in this order to reflect the process of the ZPD. In the beginning of the experience, there is a need to determine the student's knowledge and set forth a course to work through the zone. Activities are determined and conducted to aid in the student's progression, and these must also be evaluated. At the end of the experience, an assessment is needed to determine if the student has gained the knowledge of the more capable peer.

1. What role do you see yourself in when supervising a fieldwork student?
   a. Do you see yourself as more of a supervisor, teacher, mentor...

Highlights: a character assigned or assumed; a socially expected behavior pattern usually determined by an individual's status in a particular society

Concept/Condition	Favorable	Neutral or Unknown	Unfavorable
Ex. Teacher			I don't like being a teacher
Ex. Colleague		I think I am more of a colleague	

2. How do you know what a student is capable of when you first start working with them?

Highlights: how a fieldwork supervisor ascertains the abilities or personal qualities of the fieldwork student

Concept/Condition	Favorable	Neutral or Unknown	Unfavorable
Ex. Grades			I don't really check their grades; I don't trust what their faculty tell me-I like to see for myself.
Ex. Resume	Their resume says a lot about what they can do.		

3. What do you do during the fieldwork experience to guide the students?
   a. Can you be more specific about the activities that you have your students do? (solo? Team? Projects? Observation activities? …)

Highlights: the manner in which the fieldwork supervisor interacts with the students

What assignments does the fieldwork supervisor give to the fieldwork student?
Be sure to write down all specific assignments.

Concept/Condition	Favorable	Neutral or Unknown	Unfavorable
Ex. Reference training			*I won't set a student free on the reference desk for a few weeks.*
Ex. Shadow a librarian	*I always have my students shadow me for the first two weeks of their assignment.*		
Ex. Model		*I use educational theories to model concepts and instruct them*	

4. Please explain how you grade/assess/evaluate the student throughout the experience?

Highlights: how the fieldwork supervisor determines overall performance, results, and competencies of the fieldwork student throughout the experience			
Concept/Condition	Favorable	Neutral or Unknown	Unfavorable
Ex.			When a student is doing badly, sometimes I don't know how to handle it.
Ex.		I hold weekly meetings with my student to make sure we are on the right track.	
Ex.	I love to collaborate with the faculty at the school to determine a grade for a student. I feel really involved.		

5. What do you think makes a fieldwork experience worthwhile or successful?

Notes: *designate whether the worth/success is indicated for the supervisor or the student* What qualities or results does the fieldwork supervisor indicate as justifying their participation in the fieldwork experience?			
Concept/Condition	**Aimed at Supervisor**	**Aimed at Student**	**Unknown**
Ex. Praise		*Sometimes students will thank me for my time and say they got a lot out of the experience*	
Ex. Letter from faculty	*I am most pleased when I hear from faculty at the library school about the contributions I have made.*		
Ex. Feelings			*Everyone's happy*

Concept	**Representation in text**
Zone of Proximal Development	
Apprentice; student	
More knowledgeable other	
Scaffolding	
Theoretical knowledge	
Practical knowledge	

Anything else about this interview strike you (the coder) as interesting, illuminating, or important?

APPENDIX G

Solicitation Email for Coders

Sent July 29, 2012

Good afternoon!

I am looking for two student volunteers to assist me in coding data from interviews I will be conducting in August.

The responsibilities include:
> listening to my instructions and reading my codebook;
> doing a sample code of two interviews (so I can compare the two volunteers' results);
> completing the coding of the remaining interviews;
> being patient as I am also new to text analysis.

If you are interested in helping me, please drop me a line. I am especially interested in PhD students, and those who might have done content or text analysis before!

Sian Brannon

APPENDIX H

Proposed Library School Evaluation Form

216

Sample Fieldwork Evaluation Form
Library School Name here

Name of student:

Name of supervisor:

Hosting Institution:

Email: Telephone:

Semester: _____   Due Date: _____

Please complete and send this form to: _____ _____

Thank you for supporting the *Library School Fieldwork Program*. The fieldwork experience you provide is a valuable part of our students' educational experience. We value the information you can supply about the fieldwork student's activities and contributions during the fieldwork experience. Please use the following form to appraise the student's involvement and performance.

Although final grades are assigned by *library school*, your evaluation provides constructive information that we use in conjunction with final reports to fully assess the student. This evaluation is confidential, and will not be shared with the student without your permission. If you agree to share this with the student, please sign here: _____.

PART ONE - ASSIGNMENTS

List the goals set with the student, the general responsibilities of the student, and/or specific projects completed.

Did the student work the required number of hours to complete the fieldwork experience?

PART TWO – CORE COMPETENCIES

This section contains the American Library Association's Core Competences of Librarianship http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompetences. According to their website, "The Core Competences of Librarianship define the knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from ALA-accredited master's programs in library and information studies." Each part of the eight competencies are included below.

Please use the following scale to evaluate the student's performance:

5 = Excellent
4 = Very Good
3 = Average
2 = Needs Improvement
1 = Unacceptable
NA = Not Applicable

	5	4	3	2	1	NA
Foundations of the Profession						
Ethics, values, and foundational principles of the library and information profession.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Role of library and information professionals in the promotion of democratic principles and intellectual freedom (including freedom of expression, thought, and conscience).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
History of libraries and librarianship.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
History of human communication and its impact on libraries.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Current types of library (school, public, academic, special, etc.) and closely related information agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
National and international social, public, information, economic, and cultural policies and trends of significance to the library and information profession.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Legal framework within which libraries and information agencies operate. That framework includes laws relating to copyright, privacy, freedom of expression, equal rights (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act), and intellectual property.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Importance of effective advocacy for libraries, librarians, other library workers, and library services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Effective communication techniques (verbal and written).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Certification and/or licensure requirements of specialized areas of the profession.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information Resources						
Concepts and issues related to the lifecycle of recorded	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

knowledge and information, from creation through various stages of use to disposition.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Concepts, issues, and methods related to the acquisition and disposition of resources, including evaluation, selection, purchasing, processing, storing, and deselection.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Concepts, issues, and methods related to the management of various collections.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Concepts, issues, and methods related to the maintenance of collections, including preservation and conservation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Organization of Recorded Knowledge

The principles involved in the organization and representation of recorded knowledge and information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The developmental, descriptive, and evaluative skills needed to organize recorded knowledge and information resources.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The systems of cataloging, metadata, indexing, and classification standards and methods used to organize recorded knowledge and information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Technological Knowledge and Skills

Information, communication, assistive, and related technologies as they affect the resources, service delivery, and uses of libraries and other information agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The application of information, communication, assistive, and related technology and tools consistent with professional ethics and prevailing service norms and applications.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The principles and techniques necessary to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovations in order to recognize and implement relevant technological improvements.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reference and User Services

The concepts, principles, and techniques of reference and user services that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information to individuals of all ages and groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Techniques used to retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse sources for use by individuals of all ages and groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The methods used to interact successfully with individuals of all ages and groups to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance in their use of recorded knowledge and information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information literacy/information competence techniques and methods, numerical literacy, and statistical literacy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The principles and methods of advocacy used to reach specific audiences to promote and explain concepts and services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

The principles of assessment and response to diversity in user needs, user communities, and user preferences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The principles and methods used to assess the impact of current and emerging situations or circumstances on the design and implementation of appropriate services or resource development.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Research						
The fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research methods.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The central research findings and research literature of the field.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning						
The necessity of continuing professional development of practitioners in libraries and other information agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The role of the library in the lifelong learning of patrons, including an understanding of lifelong learning in the provision of quality service and the use of lifelong learning in the promotion of library services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learning theories, instructional methods, and achievement measures; and their application in libraries and other information agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The principles related to the teaching and learning of concepts, processes and skills used in seeking, evaluating, and using recorded knowledge and information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Administration and Management						
The principles of planning and budgeting in libraries and other information agencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The principles of effective personnel practices and human resource development.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The concepts behind, and methods for, assessment and evaluation of library services and their outcomes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The concepts behind, and methods for, developing partnerships, collaborations, networks, and other structures with all stakeholders and within communities served.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The concepts behind, issues relating to, and methods for, principled, transformational leadership.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART THREE – PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Please use the following scale to evaluate the student's performance:

5 = Excellent
4 = Very Good
3 = Average
2 = Needs Improvement
1 = Unacceptable
NA = Not Applicable

	5	4	3	2	1	NA
General Characteristics						
Initiative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dependability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Creativity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Judgment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Decision-making skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reliability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Resourcefulness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Innovativeness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Curiosity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relations With Others						
Cooperation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interactions with staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interactions with customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Collaboration	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Customer Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Work Habits						
Organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Completion of tasks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Independence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Follows instructions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Helpfulness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prioritization skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Time management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Speed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to Learn						
Adaptability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learns from critique	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Desire to learn more	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interest in the work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Seek evaluation of performance/feedback	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Improvement in skills over fieldwork experience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commitment						
Punctuality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attendance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learn organization's policies and procedures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participate in organization's operations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adherence to organization's restrictions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Appreciation of organization's culture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professionalism						
Behavior	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Integrity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Appearance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interest in profession	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Work Performance						
Quality of work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quantity of work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Thoroughness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accuracy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recognizes strengths	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recognizes areas for improvement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emotional Attributes						
Attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Enthusiasm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tact	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Courtesy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maturity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART FOUR – FINAL THOUGHTS

Please comment on the student's strengths:

Please comment on the student's areas for improvement:

Please provide any other comments you have on this student not covered in this evaluation:

If you had a vacancy, would you hire this student?

Would you give this student a recommendation to a prospective employer?

INFORMATION FOR THE LIBRARY SCHOOL:

Do you have any thoughts on improving the *library school*'s fieldwork experience?

How can the library school help you during fieldwork experiences?

Would you like to host another fieldwork student?

Do you believe that *library school* has adequately prepared this student for work in a library/information institution?

Did you/your institution benefit from this experience? If so, how?